BENGALURU, SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 2025 www.Bangaloremirror.com 16 Pages PRICE ₹4

Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 27 | Min 20 | Humidity 95% Generally cloudy sky with Light rain Sensex 79,809 | Nifty 24,426 | Gold 1,03,310 | Silver 1,19,900 | Dollar 88.19 | Euro 102.54 | GBP 118.57

CITY PAGE 4

Ad add-on

Facing slow growth in commuter numbers, BMTC generates ₹25.15 crore in 2024-25 from advertising on its fleet of 6,199 buses

Loan heist

Ex-bank officer snuck away more than ₹1.2 crore by sanctioning housing and property loans using fabricated documents

CITY PAGE 5

As over 46,000 RTI applications pile up in backlog, officials claim misuse by applicants is major reason for delays; RTI activists meanwhile say if depts put up info online, process will be smoother

NO INFO IN THE AGE OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Hundreds of cases of misuse in state vs mortal danger activists face

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With 46, 446 Right to Information Act (RTI) applications currently pending across departments all over Karnataka, all is not quite running smoothly in this mechanism that is aimed at bringing transparency in administration.

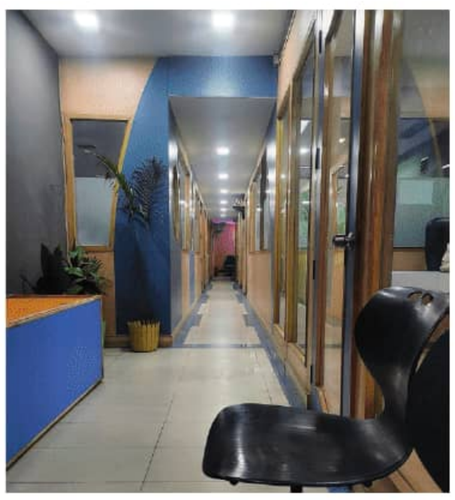
While 26 persons have been officially blacklisted for abusing the transparency law and officials say such misuse contributes to the backlogs, RTI activists have raised concern that such punishments dilute the very basis of the Act.

Bengaluru Urban tops the state with 11,428 pending RTI cases as of July 18, which officials claim is largely due to blacklisted applicants misusing the system. Former RTI Commissioner Dr Shekhar Sajjanar highlighted how individuals filed thousands of repetitive, irrelevant queries, clogging the process. He gave the instance of one applicant, Davalsab M Miyanwar from Hubballi who is said to have submitted 9,646 applications, mostly dismissed as disproportionate. Despite this, Miyanwar approached the High Court, where the bench, led by Justice Sachin Shankar Maggum, termed it a misuse of the RTI Act and judicial process. Officials note that with only eight commissioners, time is wasted on frivolous appeals, delaying responses for genuine applicants.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 »

> **"The RTI Act is increasingly being exploited. Many requests seek irrelevant information, demand excessive data, or are filed with the intent to harass officials**
>
> —Dr Shekhar Sajjanar, former RTI Commissioner

Short of hands on deck



State faces massive shortage of govt staff; 2.76 lakh posts vacant

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The Congress government, which had promised to fill all vacant posts within its first year in office, has failed to initiate significant recruitment even after completing two years. Currently, 2.76 lakh posts across various state departments remain vacant, weakening the administrative machinery.

Only vacancies notified during the previous government's tenure have been filled. Other than that, no major recruitment has taken place in the last two years. Delays in administrative approval have stalled new notifications. On an average, 30,000 employees retire each year, and some posts also become vacant due to death. Considering all four government cadres, the current vacancy stands at 2.76 lakh, which is projected to rise to 3.5 lakh by 2028. If recruitment does not begin immediately, the workload on the remaining staff in key departments is expected to increase sharply.

A government official said, "Filling vacant posts is a government responsibility, but due to delays and administrative hurdles, recruitment has not happened, causing vacancies to rise year after year."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Rhythm of devotion

The 63rd edition of Bengaluru Ganesh Utsava brings daily devotional music, dance and performances by many renowned artists. Special highlights include the women's Ganesha Pancharatna recital on August 31, and the thematic dance productions. The festivities will conclude with Ganapati Visarjan on September 6. **Where: APS & National College Grounds, Basavanagudi; When: August 28 to September 6, 7 pm**

02 Echoes of diversity

The Indian Music Experience Museum presents 'Azaadi Music Festival', celebrating India's music diversity, from folk, tribal, ghazal to classical music. The highlight performances include Padmashri Kaluram Bamaniya, Akkarai Sisters, Arivu, Indian Ocean, Divyam Sodhi and Khwaab, and folk dance showcases from Jharkhand and Orissa. **Where: Indian Music Experience Museum, JP Nagar; When: August 29 to September 7, 12 pm onwards**

03 Game on

Nexus Shantiniketan Mall is presenting 'Thrillscape', the ultimate immersive digital adventure zone, crafted with next-gen technologies blurring

the line between reality and the digital realm to offer a futuristic entertainment experience. **Where: Nexus Shantiniketan Mall; When: Until August 31, 12 pm to 9 pm**

04 Jam packed

Parmish Verma will be bringing his chart-topping hits and explosive energy for an unforgettable night of powerful music, vibrant vibes and unlimited entertainment. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity, Whitefield; When: August 30, 7 pm**

05 Vegan treats

Namu Recommends Vegan Market is back with its 15th edition, collaborating with over 130 brands showcasing cruelty- free beauty, sustainable fashion, plant-based food, and many more. The market is pet-friendly, and offers food stalls, desserts, and specialty drinks. **Where: Chamara Vajra, Jayamahal; When: September 6 to 7, 12 pm to 8 pm**

SC notice on occupancy certificate brings cheer

Apex court issues notice to Odisha state government over compliance of order requiring verification of occupancy and completion certificate for loans, homebuyers hail the move for transparent home-buying

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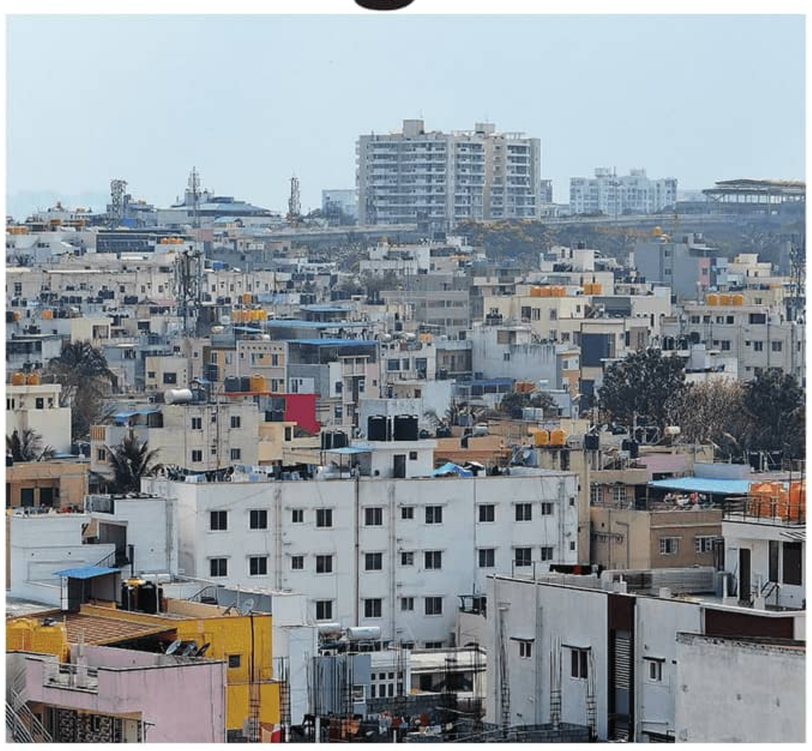

Man files petition against Odisha state government for contempt of SC order on occupancy certificates; SC issues notice to State, demands response in 2 weeks

Home buyers in Karnataka have welcomed the Supreme Court's (SC) notice to the Odisha state government for not following its directive on occupancy certificates. Bimalendu Pradhan, a home buyer, filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Odisha state government to follow the apex court's directive on occupancy certificates. The Supreme Court issued a notice to Odisha state government on August 22, mandating it to report compliance of the directive issued by it in two weeks.

Bimalendu Pradhan filed a petition invoking contempt jurisdiction of the Supreme Court against Odisha state government for not following the Supreme Court's judgment dated December 17, 2024. "Although the petitioner has invoked the contempt jurisdiction of this Court, yet we treat this petition as an application seeking compliance or rather reporting compliance of the directions issued by this Court vide the Judgment and Order dated 17-12-2024 in Civil Appeal No 14604/2024," the Supreme Court order read.

Pradhan, in conversation with Bangalore Mirror, said that he filed a contempt case against the Chief Secretary of Odisha state government for the failure to issue a circular as directed by the Supreme Court in its December 2024 order. "The case has been admitted and two weeks' time has been given to Odisha State to file a reply," said Pradhan.

Stating that banks and financial institutions often sanction loans without verifying the building's occupancy or completion certificate—an oversight that becomes one of the root causes for challenges faced by homebuyers, Karnataka Home Buyers Forum Convener Dhananjaya Padmanabhachar said that banks collect fee for verification of documents but their dereliction of duty results in sanctions to illegal buildings that have no occupancy certificate or completion certificate. "We welcome the Supreme Court's order regarding this matter and emphasising the importance of occupancy certificate/ completion certificate," he said.

The Supreme Court, in its order dated December 17, 2024, stated that banks/financial institutions shall sanction loans against any building as a security only after verifying the completion/occupancy certificate issued to a building on production of the same by the parties concerned. The violation of any of the directions would lead to initiation of contempt proceedings in addition to prosecution under the respective laws.

'MLA's role doesn't cancel transfer'

The Karnataka High Court has ruled that the transfer of a government employee cannot be invalidated merely because it was made at the recommendation of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA).

A division bench comprising Justice SG Pandit and Justice KV Aravind dismissed a petition filed by S Venkateshappa, a tahsildar, who had challenged the Karnataka Administrative Tribunal's decision upholding his transfer. The order in question, issued on December 31, 2024, transferred him from Bangarapet, Kolar district, and appointed another officer in his place.

The petitioner contended that the transfer was premature, contrary to the State's transfer guidelines, and influenced by the local MLA from Bangarapet, with whom he had differences.

The MLA had written a letter to the Revenue Minister on December 13, 2024, alleging public complaints against the petitioner, including irregular attendance and failure to address grievances. The legislator requested that the petitioner be transferred and replaced.

The High Court observed that while the transfer was indeed premature, clause 5(3) of the transfer guidelines permits such transfers under special circumstances if approved by the Chief Minister. The court noted that the records clearly showed such approval was obtained in this case. It emphasised that a transfer made at the recommendation of an MLA does not by itself render the decision illegal.

Upholding the Tribunal's order, the court concluded that as a government servant in a transferable post, he was bound by service exigencies and could not claim a vested right to remain in a particular position. **— BMB**

Health Department cancels 249 posts, orders reallocation

The Department of Health and Family Welfare has issued an order cancelling 249 existing appointments of Senior Primary Health Safety Officers, Primary Health Safety Officers, Senior Health Inspectors, and Health Inspectors working in district and taluk-level hospitals and offices. The department has directed that these cancelled posts be reallocated to regional health institutions where additional staff is required. Currently, 123 Primary Health Safety Officers and 126 Health Inspectors, both permanent and on contract, are serving under these appointments. **— BMB**

Multi-level parking facility ready

A long-pending solution to the severe parking woes in the heart of Bengaluru's Gandhi Bazaar is finally here, with a newly constructed five-storey multi-level parking complex set to open for public use shortly. Built at a cost of Rs 22 crore under the Bengaluru Smart City project, the facility—spread over 1,469 sq ft—will accommodate 142 cars across multiple floors, while also housing 48 commercial outlets on the basement and ground levels. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) took up the project after persistent congestion was caused by shoppers parking along the narrow Gandhi Bazaar Road, which was reduced to 20 feet following redevelopment. Despite initial resistance and legal hurdles, the project has now been completed and awaits inauguration. Officials say the complex will not only decongest traffic during peak hours and festive seasons but also provide relief to traders and visitors. Flower and fruit vendors, however, have urged authorities not to displace them and suggested that shops inside the complex be leased voluntarily. **— BMB**

Shelter for 53 strays at Vidhana Soudha

Plans are underway to provide a safe shelter for 53 stray dogs identified within the Vidhana Soudha premises. The Assembly Secretariat has already submitted a detailed proposal with recommendations to the government, which is now awaiting approval. Speaker UT Khader said the decision was taken to ensure both the safety of visitors and the well-being of the dogs. "There are 53 dogs inside the Vidhana Soudha campus. They often roam freely, sometimes even entering the building, which creates inconvenience. Visitors, schoolchildren, and even legislators on their morning walks have expressed concerns," he explained. **— BMB**

Prize money for national games medallists enhanced

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has announced a significant increase in cash rewards for medal winners at national sporting events. Gold medallists will now receive Rs 7 lakh, silver medallists Rs 5 lakh, and bronze medallists Rs 3 lakh, up from the earlier amounts of Rs 5 lakh, Rs 3 lakh, and Rs 2 lakh respectively. The announcement was made during the National Sports Day celebration, where the CM felicitated winners of the 38th National Games, held in Uttarakhand, where Karnataka secured 34 gold, 18 silver, and 28 bronze medals, finishing fifth overall. Siddaramaiah emphasised that the move follows a request from the Karnataka Olympic Association and assured that managers and coaches will also be rewarded. He reiterated the government's commitment to supporting sports, including job reservations for medallists, with examples like Sunil Bhati being appointed as DySP. He also reaffirmed the state's budgetary provision of Rs 5 crore, Rs 3 crore, and Rs 2 crore respectively for Olympic, Asian, and Commonwealth Games medallists, calling it encouragement, not inducement. **— BMB**

Action sought against abusive posts

The State Women's Commission has urged the Bengaluru City Police Commissioner to take legal action against individuals posting vulgar and derogatory comments on social media targeting Kannada actor Darshan's wife and son.

Darshan, who is currently facing trial in connection with the murder of Renukaswamy, was rearrested after his bail was cancelled by the Supreme Court. Following this development, several social media users allegedly began targeting his family members with abusive messages.

In a letter dated August 28, Commission Chairperson Nagalakshmi Chaudhary stated that the panel had received a petition from social activist BR Bhaskar Prasad from Nelamangala. The petition highlighted that Darshan's wife, Vijayalakshmi Darshan, and their son were being subjected to online abuse, harassment, and derogatory remarks, which amounted to mental torture. Prasad requested immediate intervention and protection for the family.

Taking cognisance of the petition, the Women's Commission directed officials to conduct an inquiry and submit a detailed report within 15 days. The Commission also sought strict legal measures to curb online harassment and ensure safety for the affected family members. **–BMB**

ED cracks down in loan fraud case

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Bengaluru, has provisionally attached immovable assets valued at Rs 1.79 crore belonging to KG Bhadraradhya in connection with a money laundering case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

According to the press release shared by ED, Bhadraradhya along with Ashok Kumar, V Vijayalakshmi, Radha Agarwal and Radha Anjana allegedly defrauded Canara Bank, Corporation Bank and Saraswat Co-operative Bank by availing vehicle loans using forged invoices purportedly issued by luxury car dealers Audi and Mercedes-Benz. The loans, worth Rs 4.84 crore, were credited into fake accounts and diverted through multiple business entities for land purchase, machinery, loan repayments and cash withdrawals.

Earlier, agricultural land valued at Rs 43.06 lakh in Tumakuru registered in Vijayalakshmi's name had already been attached and taken into ED's possession.

With the latest attachment of two RCC buildings in Nagarabhavi, the total value of assets attached has risen to Rs 2.20 crore, the agency said. **–BMB**

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Bengaluru man's PAN card misused for ₹43 crore GST fraud

Identity theft victim's wife says incident came to light during recent income tax filing which revealed that PAN card details were misused by unknown persons to generate multiple GST registration numbers

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A case of large-scale identity theft has come to light in the city after a woman filed a police complaint alleging that her husband's Permanent Account Number (PAN) card was fraudulently used to create multiple fake Goods and Services Tax (GST) registrations and carry out transactions worth Rs 43 crore.

The complainant said that her husband, who is currently working abroad, had been regularly filing his income tax returns without any irregularities. However, during the latest annual filing on August 16, the family auditor noticed unusually high-value entries in his financial records. On further scrutiny, it was revealed that several transactions, running into tens of crores, were reflected in his Annual Information Statement (AIS) and Form 26AS, documents that consolidate a taxpayer's income and tax-related details.

Suspecting foul play, the family cross-verified the records and discovered that the PAN card details had been misused by unknown persons to generate multiple GST registration numbers. These fake registrations were then used to conduct large-scale financial dealings, making it appear as though the transactions were carried out by the complainant's husband.

The family, shocked by the revelation, stated in the complaint that neither the husband nor any of his associates had any role in the said business activities. They alleged that unidentified individuals had created bogus GST accounts under his identity and laundered huge sums of money through them.

The complainant has requested police intervention to identify those behind the fraud and to ensure that her husband's tax records are cleared of the false entries. Police have registered a case and are probing how the PAN details were accessed and misused.

Fraudsters allegedly exploit gaps in verification measures to commit identity theft

High Court advocate says it is difficult to trace offenders in such cases, especially if fake accounts created to route money are shut down and culprits disappear

Advocate Raghavendra Sanjeevarao, a High Court lawyer speaking to BM, said the case clearly falls under cyber fraud and white-collar crime involving the misuse of personal details. He explained that unless there is a thorough investigation, it would be difficult to trace the accused, especially if fake accounts were created and the money routed through them before vanishing. "The challenge lies in tracking where the money has gone. If fraudulent accounts are shut down and the culprits disappear, locating them becomes nearly impossible," he said.

While stricter rules and verification measures under GST have been introduced in recent years, loopholes still exist. Fraudsters exploit these gaps by using another person's identity for shady business deals before disappearing, he added, noting that individuals from diverse backgrounds have been found committing such crimes.

Carpenter arrested for strangling wife

A domestic quarrel turned fatal in Dommasandra when a man allegedly strangled his wife to death under the influence of alcohol. The Varthur police have arrested the accused, identified as Ravindra Singh (29), a carpenter originally from Uttar Pradesh.

According to police officials, Ravindra was addicted to alcohol and frequently quarrelled with his wife. On August 28, a heated argument broke out between the couple, during which Ravindra, in an inebriated state, strangled Poonam using a rope. Following a complaint filed by the deceased's uncle, Bijender Singh, the police rushed to the scene. During interrogation, Ravindra confessed to the crime. **–BMB**

Man robbed during morning walk

A travel operator, was waylaid and robbed while stepping out for his routine morning walk in Someshwaranagar under Siddapura police limits on Friday around 5 am.

A gang of miscreants, who had been tracking his daily schedule, confronted him outside his house, threatened him with a machete, and snatched his gold chain and two rings. When he resisted handing over one of the rings, the gang allegedly brandished the weapon to intimidate him. The incident, caught on CCTV, has raised concerns over the growing menace of armed robberies.Police said that an FIR has been registered at Siddapura police station and investigation is underway. **–BMB**

Driver nabbed after 40-km chase

In a dramatic chase spanning 40 km, police arrested a car driver who fled with Rs 97 lakh belonging to his employer, a retired Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) SP, within 24 hours of the incident. Retired officer Guruprasad, who had sold land near Ballari to fund his daughter's wedding, was returning to Bengaluru with the cash when he stopped for lunch at a hotel in Challakere. Seizing the opportunity, his driver Ramesh sped away with the money-laden car. Police tracked the vehicle using GPS and alerted Tumakuru and Andhra Pradesh counterparts. In a desperate bid to escape, Ramesh tried to evade police but crashed the car into a tree during the chase. He had hidden Rs 96 lakh at his grandmother's house in Pavagada, spending only Rs 3,200 on fuel. The entire amount was recovered, and Ramesh was taken into custody. **–BMB**

Public transport corporation earns ₹25 crore from ads

Connecting communities with reliable transit, driving growth through innovation and advertising, ensuring accessible journeys for all amid evolving city transport challenges and rising commuter expectations daily

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Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation, facing slow growth in commuter numbers amid Metro and ride-hailing competition, generated ₹25.15 crore in 2024-25 from advertising on its fleet of 6,199 buses, sustaining operations through enhanced non-fare revenue sources

During a recent reply in the Legislative Council, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said that BMTC currently operates 6,199 buses, with annual maintenance costs for 2024-25 pegged at ₹83.50 crore. To offset slow growth in fare collection, the corporation has tapped into private advertising, following a structured tender process under Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement (KTPP) regulations.

Official data reveals that 3,000 regular buses now carry advertisements managed by an, who secured the contract at ₹12,616 per bus per month, marginally above the original tender rate of ₹12,500. Additionally, 400 Volvo buses display advertisements handled by another advertising agency at ₹25,255 per bus per month. Collectively, these campaigns generate an average monthly revenue of ₹4.64 crore, contributing to a total of ₹25.15 crore for the 2024-25 fiscal year. These funds are directed towards salaries, fuel, and other essential operational costs.

"The government's initiative to allow private advertising on buses highlights BMTC's shift towards commercial strategies to sustain operations amid ridership challenges. All ad installations follow official guidelines, and unauthorised advertising is promptly addressed. Over the past three years, contracts have consistently gone to established firms, ensuring transparency and steady revenue inflows", said an official. Many commuters have criticised the advertisements on bus exteriors saying that they are unable to identify the buses properly. However, officials claim that this approach reflects a broader trend in urban public transport, where authorities increasingly leverage non-fare income sources such as advertising to maintain service quality, invest in fleet maintenance, and reduce dependency on fluctuating passenger numbers. With ridership yet to pick up, such revenue diversification is crucial for BMTC's financial sustainability.

Full-wrap advertising on BMTC bus increases brand visibility across Bengaluru's busy and crowded roads

"This is not the first time the bus corporation has gone for full-wrap advertisements. It was there earlier too. It was for AC buses and has now been extended to non-AC buses. 3000 non-AC buses will carry full bus wrap advertisements
– GT Prabhakar Reddy, The Chief Traffic Manager

New BMTC schedules aim to reduce driver fatigue

Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) has revised schedules for 3,000 buses following allegations by workers' unions that drivers were being forced to work up to 12 hours a day, contributing to rising accident cases. The unions pointed out that, under labour laws, drivers should not work beyond eight hours, yet many were compelled to rush trips under pressure, often without proper overtime pay. This, they argued, was leading to stress, fatigue, and accidents. A BMTC official said, "BMTC Revises 3,000 Bus Schedules to Reduce Driver Fatigue, Accidents. A BMTC official said, "Responding to these concerns, BMTC has now reduced the number of trips per bus, factoring in traffic congestion, ongoing road and metro works, speed breakers, and bus stop density. While the corporation has warned drivers of dismissal if found responsible for two fatal accidents, it has also begun training programs to prevent mishaps. We hope the new schedule will ease pressure on drivers and improve passenger safety across the city."

Vacancies pile up as hiring in limbo

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The State Administrative Reforms Commission had recommended filling vacant posts in various departments to improve governance. Accordingly, departments submitted proposals to the Finance Department and received approvals. However, the government has delayed initiating the recruitment process despite reports from administrative authorities. This has raised concerns about further postponements in hiring. "After the submission of Nagamohan's report, the state government had promised to fill vacancies. However, citing deficiencies and lapses in the report, recruitment has been delayed. The government must begin the process immediately, without waiting for further administrative approvals," said an activist.

Education, health departments worst hit

The Education and Literacy Department tops the list with 70,727 vacant posts. The Health and Medical Education Department follows with 37,069 vacancies. Staff shortages in these departments have hampered their ability to provide quality education and healthcare services.

Vacancies in key departments

School Education & Literacy	70,727
Health & Medical Education	37,069
Internal Administration	26,168
Higher Education	13,227
Revenue	11,145
Rural Development & Panchayat Raj	10,898
Animal Husbandry	10,755
Backward Classes Welfare	8,334
Forest	6,337
Finance	9,536

Government schools face a severe shortage of teachers, while health services struggle to meet public needs. Other key departments with vacant posts include Internal Administration, Revenue, Agriculture, and Rural Development, with thousands of posts remaining unfilled.

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Item of work	Approx. Value
Corrigendum 1, Schedule - D1 Item - 8 Description is modified and Documents added, Corrigendum 2, Documents added for Provision of Automatic Signalling between Chennasandra - Penukonda (CSDR-PKD) Section of Bengaluru Divisions. (Details already uploaded in website.)	Rs. 139,40,69,610.88

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Forest Department moves to reclaim land at Abhiman Studio

The Forest Department has initiated steps to take back 10 acres of forest land that had been allotted for Abhiman Studio. Officials said the land was sanctioned with the condition that it would be used solely for the purpose of the studio and not for any other activity. Confirming this action, Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar B. Khandre said that there would be no compromise when it comes to reclaiming unconverted forest land. "As soon as I learnt that certain land under HMT was forest land, I initiated legal proceedings. Likewise, whatever is classified as forest will continue to remain forest," he said. On the issue of late actor Vishnuvardhan, the minister said he holds immense respect for the legendary star. However, he clarified that the decision on allotting land for Vishnuvardhan's memorial would rest with the Chief Minister. — BMB

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Dumping hazard

SG Palya

Daily dumping of piles of garbage behind the HP Petrol Pump at SG Palya, CV Raman Nagar is obstructing pedestrians and making it increasingly difficult for them to use the road.

Repair failure

Chikkabanavara

Just months after repair work, pavement bricks near an apartment in Chikkabanavara, North Bengaluru are coming loose due to poor workmanship. Despite repeated complaints, the BBMP has yet to take action.

Garbage zone

Hanumanthappa Layout

Garbage littering along 3rd Cross in Hanumanthappa Layout, Sultanpalya continues to cause inconvenience and discomfort for residents living in the area.

Mallya plea to be heard in Sept

The Karnataka High Court on Friday directed that in September it will hear petitions filed by fugitive liquor baron Vijay Mallya and Daljit Mahal, Director of United Breweries Holdings Limited (UBHL in liquidation). The petitions seek directions to banks to furnish detailed statements of accounts relating to the dues owed by Mallya, UBHL, and other certificate debtors.

The petitioners have sought that the statements reflect not only the periodic accrual of interest but also credits for all recoveries made since the amended recovery certificate dated April 10, 2017, issued by the Debts Recovery Tribunal (DRT).

Justice BM Shyam Prasad, while passing orders, recorded the submissions of Senior Advocate Sajan Poovayya, who argued that the present writ petition and another matter, WP 3357/2025, involve common issues and may be heard together. It was further submitted that service of notice on certain respondents could be dispensed with, as Advocate Chandrakant K. Patil was already representing them in the connected petition. The Court accordingly directed Patil to take notice for both sets of respondents and adjourned the matter to September 15. —BMB

Ex-bank officer booked in multi-crore loan fraud

Complaints detail how housing and property loans worth over ₹1.2 crore were sanctioned using fabricated documents, raising serious accountability questions within the bank

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A woman who previously worked as a loan approver at a major public sector bank now faces accusations in an expanding fraud scandal. Three criminal cases have been filed against her for allegedly conspiring with borrowers to siphon off large sums through forged documents. Identified as Sujatha (name changed), the accused officer, formerly with the bank's Loan Document Verification Department, is accused of verifying and approving multiple sets of fabricated documents that allowed borrowers to obtain loans which were never repaid.

On Friday, the 3rd Additional Chief judicial magistrate court (ACJM) in Bengaluru examined three separate private complaints filed by bank officials that detail how Sujatha (name changed) allegedly colluded with borrowers and facilitated fraudulent approvals.

In the initial complaint, the borrower submitted forged employment documents claiming to work with an IT firm in Bengaluru. The file contained a fake offer letter, fabricated payslips, forged income tax returns, and a counterfeit company ID card. Despite obvious discrepancies, Sujatha verified and approved a loan of nearly ₹77 lakh for purchasing a flat. When the borrower defaulted, the bank re-verified the information and found that neither the company records nor tax filings existed, proving the entire employment history was fabricated.

In the second complaint, the borrower applied for a housing loan with a forged set of documents claiming to be employed at another reputed IT company. She used a counterfeit ID card, false salary slips, and fake income tax returns. Again, Sujatha (name changed) validated the documents as genuine, leading to a sanctioned loan of over ₹51 lakh.

After the borrower failed to repay, the bank-initiated verification and found that she was never employed at the company she had claimed, and her financial statements were entirely fabricated.

The third case took a different route. Here, the borrower colluded with property agents to produce fake valuation reports and title deeds. Sujatha (name changed) allegedly signed off on these documents without independent checks, allowing the loan to be approved. When recovery proceedings began, it was found that the property valuation had been inflated and the ownership records were bogus, effectively making the loan unsecured.

Verification lapses under lens

In all three cases, the pattern was the same, borrowers prepared forged employment, income, or property papers; Sujatha (name changed), instead of flagging them, gave official clearance and the loans were sanctioned. Only after borrowers defaulted did the fraud come to light, when the bank's back-end verification revealed that the documents were counterfeit.

Police officials informed BM that the case was referred to them by the court following an application filed by the bank. An FIR has been registered as per the court's directive. The documents submitted by the borrowers to obtain loans were later revealed to be forged and have been presented before the court. The investigation is ongoing, with authorities also probing the involvement of the accused bank officer who facilitated the fraudulent transactions.

Sources also pointed to loopholes in the bank's internal verification process, questioning how loans worth several lakhs were sanctioned by an institution known for strict document checks. According to them, the bank first approached the police to file a complaint, but when questions were raised about the lapses, the matter was taken to court, which then referred it back to the police, leading to the registration of the FIR.

Three FIRs filed in one day allege she cleared forged employment, income, and property papers, enabling borrowers to siphon lakhs of rupees

Green nod clears way for BU's PM-USHA block

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BBMP sources said the Tree Expert Committee is inspecting to assess which of 419 trees can be saved

Bangalore University has received green signals from the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) and Karnataka Biodiversity Board (KBB) for its controversial PM-USHA scheme project.

Reportedly both departments have issued letters stating that the area proposed for the project does not come under their ambit.

"BU administration wanted to understand if the area proposed for the PM-USHA project is a forest area. KFD has written a letter stating that while it used to be a forest area, it was de-notified. Thus, the varsity does not need permission from the Karnataka Forest Department to use the proposed land for the project," said Ravindra Kumar, Deputy Conservator of Forest, Bengaluru Urban, KFD.

A source from KBB told BM that a letter from the Board, clarifying that the area kept aside for the PM-USHA scheme is not a proposed bio heritage site, has been sent to BU, paving the way for the varsity to go ahead with the project.

According to sources from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), the Tree Expert Committee (TEC) is now inspecting the area to assess trees that can be saved out of the proposed 419 trees slated to be cut for the project.

Notably, a couple of months ago, BBMP put out a public notice for the removal of 419 trees on the campus to make way for a new academic and research block under the PM-USHA scheme.

Following the notice, Bangalore University received nearly 25K objections from concerned citizens about the felling of the trees. These include objections through online petitions and on-paper signatures submitted to the Forest Wing of BBMP.

Citizens, in their objections, say the trees on the Jnanabharathi campus are required to maintain the lung space of the city.

However, BU has maintained that half of the trees proposed to be cut are eucalyptus trees, and the site selected is not a part of any of the bio-parks on the campus.

"Given the current situation of Bengaluru, every tree, including eucalyptus, is important and must be protected. The BU administration has clarified that the total encroached land on the campus is around 40 acres, from the previous 75 acres. This implies that nearly 35 acres of land have been freed from encroachment. This land can be used for new courses," said Dr TJ Renuka Prasad, a retired professor at BU and President of Jnanabharathi Vayuvihargala Sangha, a group of city-based environmentalists and conservationists.

Environmentalists say Bengaluru cannot afford to lose more trees

Residential plots in B'luru see surge

Bengaluru plots are in demand as buyers seek high-return investments with modern amenities. Increased interests on gated communities are making plotted developments the city's hottest real estate trend

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Bengaluru, India's technology and innovation hub, is witnessing a surge in demand for residential plots, making land one of the most promising investment avenues in the city. With growing infrastructure, rising land values, and developers offering plotted layouts equipped with modern amenities, buyers are increasingly viewing plots as a secure and high-return asset.

Plots outshine other real estate assets

While apartments and villas remain popular, realtors say plots are emerging as the smartest investment choice. "Unlike apartments, which depreciate over time due to wear and tear, plots only appreciate," says Rajesh M, Real Estate Analyst.

"In Bengaluru, where land is scarce and demand is soaring, plotted developments have delivered annual returns of 12–18% in certain micro-markets." From North Bengaluru, driven by the Kempegowda International Airport expansion, to South Bengaluru's Kanakapura Road with its new bypasses and Metro extensions, plotted layouts are noticing a strong demand from both end-users and investors.

Amenities add to the appeal

"Buying a plot no longer means compromising on lifestyle," explains Priya Reddy, Vice President of a leading real estate firm.

"Customers can invest in land and still enjoy modern conveniences within a gated community. It gives them flexibility to build homes later while enjoying amenities from day one." For families, such developments are particularly attractive. "We wanted the freedom to design our home but also wanted a safe, amenity-rich community for our children. A plotted development in North Bengaluru gave us both," says Sandeep Kumar, a software engineer who recently purchased a 1,200 sq ft plot.

Strategic infrastructure push

Experts point out that Bengaluru's infrastructure expansion is directly influencing plot demand. The Bengaluru–Mysuru Expressway, upcoming Peripheral Ring Road, Metro Phases 2 and 3, and the planned satellite town ring road are opening up new corridors for plotted housing. "Every major infrastructure project translates into a wave of plotted developments in nearby areas," says an urban planner.

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IT hubs and Metro boost Bengaluru real estate

Sarjapur Road and Thanisandra Main Road leading in property and rental growth, driven by IT expansion and metro connectivity

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Bengaluru's real estate market has once again emerged as one of the most rewarding for both investors and homeowners, with two of its micro-markets—Sarjapur Road and Thanisandra Main Road—delivering some of the highest capital and rental growth in the country from late 2021 to Q2 2025, according to new ANAROCK Research data.

Sarjapur Road, a key part of the city's eastern IT corridor, recorded a 79% jump in property prices over the period, while average monthly rentals for a standard 2BHK rose a staggering 81%, reaching ₹38,000. This surge has been fuelled by the upcoming Red Line Namma Metro linking Hebbal to Sarjapur, continued IT expansion, and limited land availability in the area.

Thanisandra Main Road, in North Bengaluru, matched Sarjapur's capital gains with an 81% rise in prices, while rentals grew 65% to ₹33,800 per month. Proximity to Manyata Tech Park, improving road connectivity, and steady demand from IT professionals have kept the market buoyant.

Connectivity Drives Growth

The ANAROCK report highlights that across 14 high-performing micro-markets in major cities, those with strong infrastructure pipelines—metro projects, expressways, or proximity to airports—consistently outperformed the rest. Nationwide, Noida's Sector-150 topped the charts with 139% capital appreciation and 71% rental growth, driven by large township developments and greenfield development. Bengaluru's IT hubs, however, led on rental growth, with Sarjapur Road's 81% jump the highest in the country.

National Outlook

Anuj Puri, Chairman of ANAROCK Group, said the real estate boom that began post-pandemic was driven by pent-up demand, low interest rates, and a renewed focus on homeownership. While price growth has moderated since 2023, infrastructure-led markets like Bengaluru continue to defy the cooling trend. "Looking ahead to 2026, we expect housing prices to grow by 6–7% annually, with rentals rising 7–10%—both outpacing inflation," Puri said. "Micro-markets tied to major infrastructure completions, especially Bengaluru's metro corridors, are best placed to sustain above-average gains."

With the city's IT sector showing no signs of slowing and multiple metro lines nearing completion, its prime growth pockets look set to remain a magnet for both investors and end-users.

From quiet corners to prime plots: Kanakapura Road awakens

Kanakapura Road is no longer a suburban stretch, it has rapidly evolved into Bengaluru's next prime real estate hotspot. Expressways, Metro connectivity, along with modern plotted communities offering lifestyle amenities make it a perfect place to grow your legacy

Bengaluru's Kanakapura Road, once viewed as a quiet suburban stretch, has today transformed into one of the city's most promising investment corridors. Real estate experts say that while buyers earlier settled for "just a plot," modern plotted communities on Kanakapura Road now offer a rare combination of lifestyle amenities and peace of mind,along with strong appreciation potential—making them a lasting legacy for future generations.

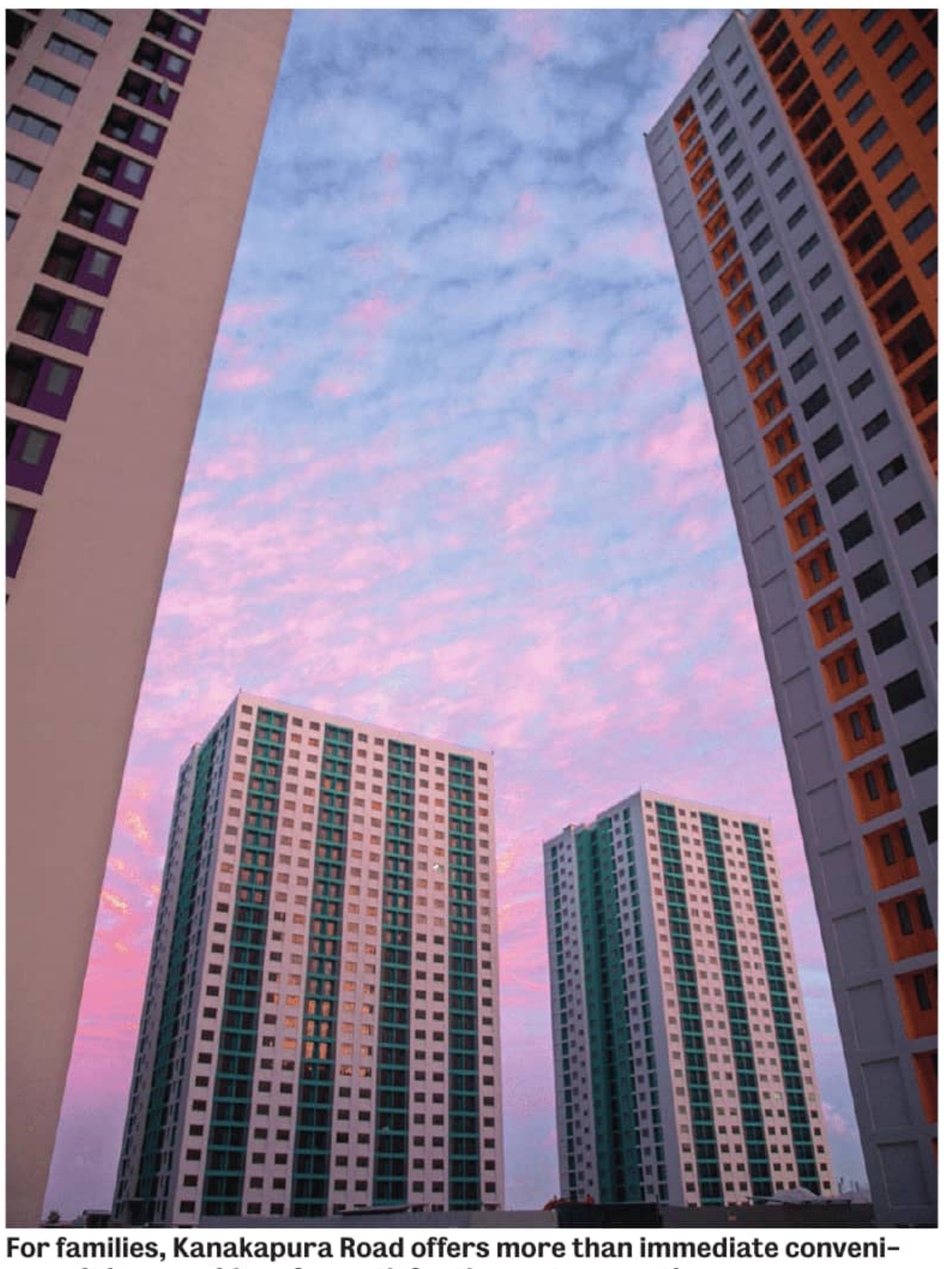
Infrastructure Drives Growth

The boom along Kanakapura Road is being fuelled by rapid infrastructure upgrades. The Bengaluru–Mysuru Expressway, the Harohalli and Kanakapura bypasses and the upcoming Metro Phase 2 extension have dramatically cut travel time and opened up new residential catchments. "Connectivity is the backbone of real estate growth, and Kanakapura Road is ticking all the right boxes," says S Ramesh, Managing Director of a Bengaluru-based real estate advisory firm. "With the Metro extending up to Tataguni and major highways reducing traffic bottlenecks, plots here are no longer just pieces of land but have become strategic investments."

The planned Peripheral Ring Road and industrial developments in Harohalli are expected to further strengthen the region's value.

Communities with Amenities

Unlike earlier times when buyers purchased land only for long-term holding, today's plotted developments on Kanakapura Road come with gated security, landscaped gardens, clubhouses, children's play areas, and eco-friendly features. "Why settle for just a plot when you can get a secure, lifestyle-oriented community?" asks Nithya Gowda, a realtor specialising in South Bengaluru. "Buyers are increasingly drawn to projects that combine the freedom of design with amenities that enhance day-to-day living." Buyers share this view, saying "We were looking for a space that not only grows in value but also gives us peace of mind. A plotted project here offered both—modern amenities for our children and clear legal titles for our security," says Arun Kumar, an IT professional who recently bought a 1,500 sq ft plot near Kaggalipura.



For families, Kanakapura Road offers more than immediate convenience; it is a corridor of growth for the next generation

A Future-Ready Investment

For families, Kanakapura Road offers more than immediate convenience; it is a corridor of growth for the next generation. Educational institutions, healthcare centres, shopping hubs, and upcoming IT parks are steadily making the region self-sufficient. "Ten years from now, this stretch will be one of Bengaluru's most sought-after residential belts," predicts realtor Sunil Shetty. "Investing in a plotted layout here is not just about owning land but about securing a future where your children can thrive in a well-developed neighbourhood."

–Prakash VL

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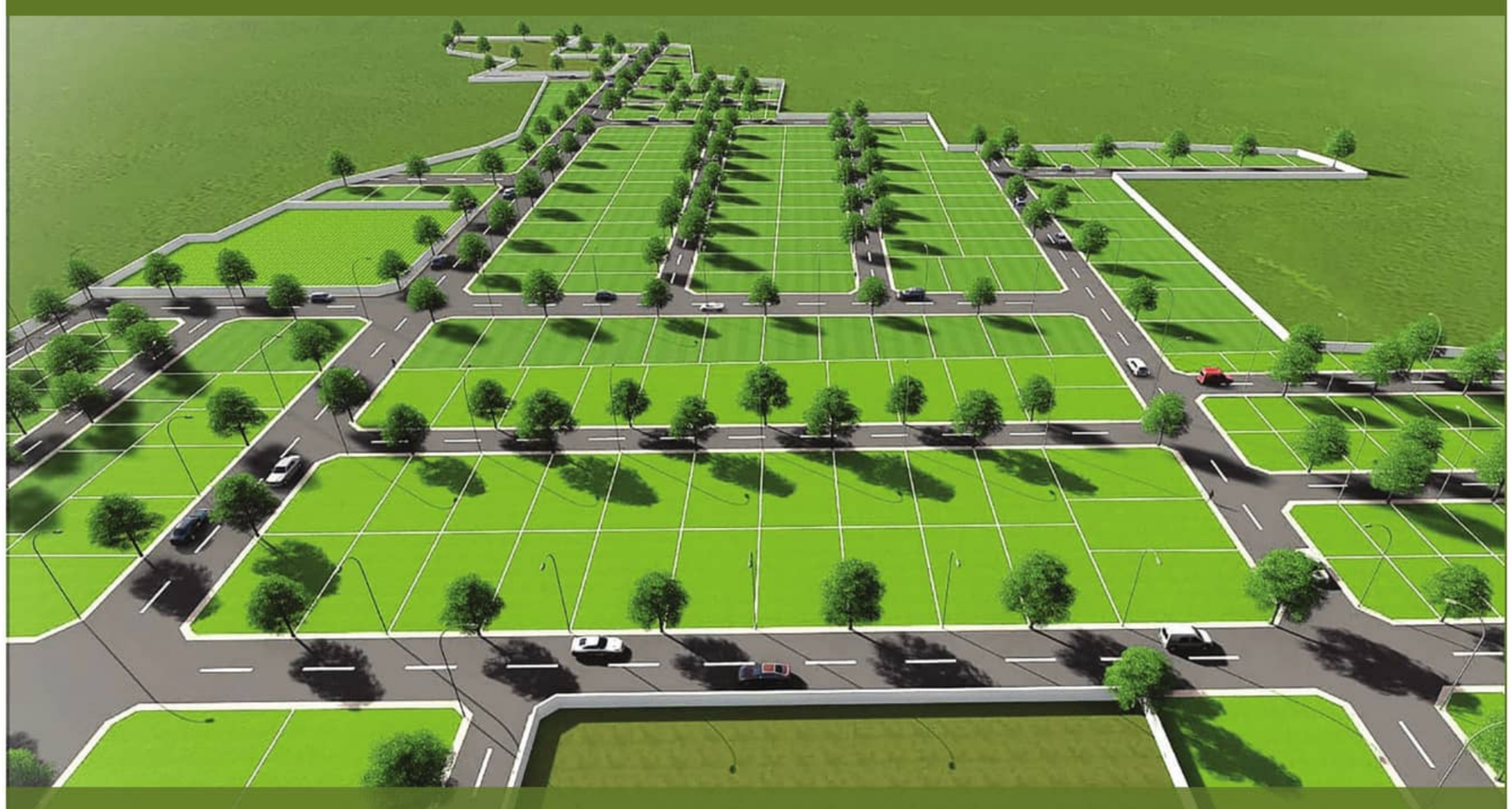

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States demand revenue shield as Centre plans GST slab cuts

Karnataka, 7 other states urge full compensation and new levies to offset losses from proposed GST rationalisation, warning severe fiscal instability

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With the Centre preparing to announce GST rate rationalisation measures that may reduce tax slabs, states such as Karnataka are voicing concerns that their fiscal targets could be hit. Eight states — Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, West Bengal, Punjab, Jharkhand, and Himachal Pradesh — have collectively submitted proposals urging the Union government to protect their revenues before moving ahead with the plan.

Revenue Minister CB Krishna Byregowda met his counterparts from other like-minded states in New Delhi on Friday and said that while states do not oppose the principle of GST simplification, any rationalisation exercise must be supported by a strong and transparent revenue protection mechanism to ensure fiscal stability and avoid disruption. The states have sought full compensation to offset losses from rate cuts, warning that without safeguards, state finances would face severe instability and developmental projects could suffer significant delays.

States propose additional levy on sin and luxury goods, ensuring revenue neutrality while discouraging harmful consumption amid GST slab rationalisation

One of the key suggestions is the imposition of an additional levy on sin and luxury goods such as pan masala, tobacco, and high-end products, over and above the proposed 40% slab. States have insisted that the proceeds from this levy should be fully transferred to them. This would keep the effective tax incidence unchanged while discouraging unhealthy consumption.

The states have also recommended that if revenue gaps persist even after the levy, the Union government should raise loans against future cess collections, following the precedent set during the pandemic.

According to Karnataka's proposal, FY 2024–25 should be fixed as the base year for revenue protection, with both GST revenues and compensation cess included in the calculation. They have demanded compensation at a 14% annual growth rate—matching the average of the past three years—and guaranteed for at least five years. After this period, the framework could be reviewed depending on GST buoyancy.

States argue that previous rounds of rationalisation have already eroded revenues. The effective GST rate has fallen from 14.4% in FY18 to 11.6% in FY24 and could drop below 10% after the new cuts. Meanwhile, GST revenues as a share of GDP remain lower than pre-GST levels, raising concerns that consumption growth alone may not offset the losses.

Independent estimates suggest states could collectively lose between ₹85,000 crore and ₹2 lakh crore annually. With GST accounting for nearly half of states' own tax revenues, such shortfalls could force them to slash developmental expenditure, the states warned.

They have also sought clarity on the Centre's plan for cess collections on sin and luxury goods, which currently make up about 7–8% of GST revenues. For instance, pan masala now attracts an 88% effective tax; reducing it to 40% without a matching levy would nearly halve collections. Unless addressed, such gaps could worsen fiscal stress for states.

States stressed that GST was founded on consensus and cooperative federalism, with the original compensation mechanism serving as a crucial safeguard. Ending this framework in 2022 left states vulnerable, with their GST-to-GDP ratio dropping from 3.7% to 2.8% in just two years. .States warned GST changes without safeguards risk fiscal shock, urging balanced approach to ensure revenue security and autonomy.

K'taka tops PM2.5 emissions as old trucks lag behind on BS-VI adoption

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Karnataka is the leading state in the country in terms of PM2.5 emissions from heavy commercial vehicles. According to the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP), the state contributes 13.6 Gg (13,600 tonnes) of PM2.5 emissions annually from this category of vehicles.

The emission estimates are based on vehicle registration data for 2022, which indicates poor adoption of Bharat Stage VI (BS-VI) norms in Karnataka. Despite stricter emission standards being in place since 2020, the state still has a large number of older vehicles on the road. These include 8,133 BS-I heavy commercial vehicles, 40,582 BS-II vehicles, 1,12,721 BS-III vehicles, 62,918 BS-IV vehicles, and only 44,566 BS-VI vehicles.

Researchers point out that heavy commercial vehicles (HCVs) emit significantly more pollutants than recommended standards when poorly maintained or aged, a category referred to as "super-emitters." These vehicles release 4–11 times more emissions compared to regular vehicles.

For its analysis, CSTEP considered all vehicles older than 15 years and 17% of each newer age group as super-emitters, which meant that nearly 23% of the fleet on the road in 2022 fell into this category.

Super-emitters among old heavy commercial vehicles produce 4–11 times more emissions, worsening Karnataka's air quality despite BS-VI norms

The report notes that while BS-I and BS-II vehicles make up only 2–10% of the fleet, they are responsible for 10–35% of PM2.5 emissions. Similarly, BS-III vehicles constitute about 40% of the fleet but contribute nearly 45% of emissions. In contrast, newer BS-IV and BS-VI vehicles account for 15–28% of the fleet but only 10% of emissions.

CSTEP warns that under a business-as-usual scenario, the number of HCVs will increase by 27% by 2035. However, overall emissions are expected to decline due to the gradual scrappage of older vehicles and wider adoption of BS-VI norms. Despite this, super-emitters will continue to dominate the emissions profile unless targeted policies are implemented.

> **Karnataka leads India in PM2.5 emissions from heavy commercial vehicles, contributing 13.6 Gg annually due to outdated fleets and super-emitters**
>
> –Researchers at the Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP)

The study highlights several challenges, including lack of focus on super-emitters, inadequate scrappage and retrofitting infrastructure, high costs for adopting electric or alternative fuel vehicles, and regulatory gaps in implementing low-emission zones. Additionally, India's heavy reliance on road transport for freight movement further compounds the issue.

Experts call for strict emission norms. programs, and cleaner fuel adoption to reduce heavy commercial vehicle pollution across sKarnataka and India.

Advance booking required for Mullayanagiri Trek

Tourists planning to visit Mullayanagiri, Karnataka's highest peak in the Bababudangiri range, must now book slots online in advance. The Chikkamagaluru district administration introduced this system to manage heavy tourist inflow and ease traffic congestion in the hill region. Visitors can reserve their preferred date and time on the official website by paying a fee. Each day will be split into two slots, allowing a maximum of 600 vehicles per slot. Officials said this move aims to streamline visitor flow and provide a safer, less crowded trekking experience. **–BMB**

Teen delivers baby inside Yadgir hostel

A shocking incident unfolded in Yadgir district when a teenage student of a government residential school gave birth to a baby boy inside the hostel washroom on Wednesday. Both mother and child were rushed to the district government hospital for treatment. The case has sparked outrage across the state, raising serious concerns about safety and supervision in hostels. The District Child Protection Officer has filed a case under the POCSO and Juvenile Justice Acts against the school principal, hostel warden, contract nurse, and the girl's brother. Three staff members have been suspended, and the nurse's services withdrawn. Meanwhile, the State Child Rights Commission has taken suo motu cognisance, seeking a detailed report, underscoring lapses in child protection and rising cases of teen pregnancies. **–BMB**

State launches AI water tracker

Karnataka will soon launch Digital Water Stock, a satellite and AI-powered platform aimed at ensuring transparency and accountability in water resource management, announced Minor Irrigation Minister NS Bhojaraju. Touted as the first such initiative in India, the system will consolidate data on lakes, tanks, and groundwater under a single digital platform for survey, monitoring, and management. Powered by satellite imagery, sensors, AI, and machine learning, it will track water storage, compare present levels with five-year historical data, and flag anomalies for timely action. Initially, the project will cover 41 taluks identified as over-exploiting groundwater. The Karnataka Tank Conservation and Development Authority will spearhead the effort, marking a significant move toward scientific water governance. **–BMB**

One-Third K'taka cooperatives face loss

In Karnataka, over 14,570 of the state's 43,000 cooperative societies nearly 34% are operating at a loss, including around 2,200 milk producer societies. Expressing concern, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah directed officials to prioritise loan recovery and ensure strict accountability to strengthen the cooperative sector. During a review meeting with the Cooperation Department, he emphasised tighter monitoring of dairy societies' expenditure and swift legal action in malpractice cases. The CM also instructed filling vacant inspector posts, digitising registrar services, and curbing unauthorised chit fund and credit firms. Additionally, the state has targeted disbursing ₹28,000 crore in farm loans to 32 lakh farmers this year, with ₹4,362 crore already released by July, achieving 96% of the target. **–BMB**

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Letter to governor urges protection of RTI Act

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"If out of 100% of the cases, one individual alone files 15,000 applications which itself accounts for 5% and consists of repeated duplicates, imagine how many of the remaining 95% could also be duplicate or frivolous applications," said Sajjanar.

According to Sajjanar, there are hundreds of such cases. "The RTI Act is increasingly being exploited. Many requests seek irrelevant information, demand excessive data, or are filed with the intent to harass officials. In some cases, applicants even attempt to threaten officials when information cannot be provided. Overburdening with duplications of application is also one kind of harassment. Thousands of such applications remain pending before the Karnataka Right to Information Commission, leaving genuine requests unresolved and defeating the very purpose of the Act," he said. He emphasised that this is not to say one must not not seek answers. "But remember, this facility is for the people to know what a government's

project is, how much it has cost, when the work will be completed or maybe to know about law and other aspects, so it must be used in the proper manner," said Sajjanar.

However, RTI activists oppose this view.

BH Veeresh of the Right to Information Study Centre, recently wrote to the Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot, voicing strong opposition to what is described as "a deliberate attempt to dilute the Right to Information Act under the guise of misuse".

Veeresh alleged in the letter that vested interests within the Information Commission and sections of the media were running campaigns portraying RTI applicants as offenders. "More than 12 RTI activists have been murdered in the state, and several others have been harassed with false police complaints. Treating information seekers as criminals is a dangerous trend," the letter stated.

The petition highlighted widespread corruption within autonomous institutions and cited the recent arrest of a Karnataka Information Commissioner on bribery charges as evidence of systemic rot. "Corruption can be curbed only when the work orders of all public authorities, including the Public Works Department, Water Resources Department, Gram Panchayats, Municipalities, Urban Corporations, Irrigation Department, are published on the internet before the works start and when they are published at the place where the work is being done. But when the work orders are asked for and information is submitted, it takes about two to three years for the information to be investigated by the Information Commissions and made available to the applicants," his letter notes.

Quoting the Supreme Court's 2023 directive and a 2013 Central Government memorandum, the Centre stressed that if public authorities mandatorily publish the information on their websites, 90 percent of the applications filed under Right to Information can be reduced.

According to Sajjanar, the other end of the spectrum is harassment of government officials. "Some individuals misuse RTI to intimidate people. They file applications seeking information and later there are chances of using it as leverage to extort money or settle personal scores. When we receive the application, we don't receive the actual names; instead, applications come numbered, such as 'Application 1.' This creates the possibility of blacklisted individuals filing petitions under false names or impersonating others," he explained.

Thousands of pending cases

Among the departments, Rural Development & Panchayat Raj leads RTI backlog list with 14,444 pleas, followed by Revenue (7,856) and Urban Development (6,703). In contrast, the CM Office and Skill Development have minimal cases, highlighting disparities. Some applicants have filed too many applications, with 77 queries in a single request.

According to Sajjanar, misuse of the exemption for Below Poverty Line (BPL) cardholders, who do not need to pay for applications or copies, is also an issue. This has led to a surge of requests demanding hundreds of pages of information without any genuine public purpose.

He suggested that it is time for the government to review rules and close loopholes. "Acts can't be changed but rules can," he said. Suggestions include disallowing applications based solely on BPL ration cards, increasing fines for false or misleading information. However, Veeresh cautioned against any tweaks to RTI. "We strongly oppose the Karnataka Information Commission's recommendation to amend the Act. We request you to immediately withdraw this recommendation and help protect the Right to Information," he said.

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I, ASHA SARVADE , W/o Sachin Krishnamurthy Sarvade, R/o, #304,SB Dream Homes, 3, Banjara Layout Main Rd, Horamavu, Bangalore-560043, have changed my name to ASHA SACHIN SARVADE for all purposes.

I, Mohit Shrikant Pimplapure, R/at Flat No.407, 4th Floor, Shravanthi Gardens, 17th Cross, 13th Main, JP Nagar, 5th Phase, Bangalore-560078 have changed my name to Mohit Pimplaapure, vide affidavit dt: 29.08.2025 Notary B. Chitra, Blr.

I, Jagdish Agrawal S/O Mukhram Agrawal born on 21/03/1960 residing at 4051, Habitat Eden Heights, Hoodi Main Road, Hoodi, Bengaluru, KA-560048, have changed my name to Jagdish Prasad Agrawal vide affidavit dated 28/08/2025 at Bengaluru.

I, Anirudha Ravindra Murthy s/o Ravindra Murthy Ananthamurthy R/o No-1121, Samruddhi, 30th Main Rd,Poor-napragna Nagar Uttarahalli, B'luru-560061 have changed my name to Anirudh Ravindra Murthy for all Purposes.

I, VIDYASHREE S K, D/o SHANKAR RAO KUIKARNI, R/o 13 SREE LALITHA UTTARADHI MUTT ROAD UTTARADHI MUTT SHANKARPURAM BANGALORE 560004, INDIA have changed my name to VIDYA SANTOSH.

I, Esha Roy Fernandez R/o Flat.001, Gragland Apts, No.21, Hutchius road, Frazer town, Bengaluru 560005 have changed my name to Esha Roy. I shall be called by this name for all purposes

I, Mahendar Singh Husband of Davinder Kaur, staying at 1-B, Al Yaseen Enclave, Urban Clusters Layout, TC Palya, Krishnarajapuram, Bengaluru - 560036, have changed my name from Mohinder Singh to Mahendar Singh vide affidavit No IN-KA28090598634763X dated 26.08.2025 for all future purposes.

I, TAMMINIDI SRI VANI, R/at No.347, 6 Main, 15th B Cross, West of Chord Road, Mahalakshmipuram, Bengaluru-560086 have changed our minor daughter's name from KARTHIKA VIHA T to TAMMINIDI KARTHIKA VIHA, vide affidavit dt: 26/08/2025 sworn before notary Rajeshwari, Bangalore.

I, FAROOQ FAROOQ AMEER (Old Name) S/o Ameer Sab resident of No. 22, 4th Main Road, Near Anjeneya Temple, Gangondanahalli, Bangalore – 560039 have changed my name to FAROOQ AMEER FAROOQ (New Name) vide affidavit dated: 22/8/2025 Before Notary Deepa. M Bangalore.

I, SANDHYA KAILAS GUPTA D/o Ramesh Kailas, R/o #1004 Lotus Tower-6, Adarsh Palm Retreat, ORR Ecoworld Devarabisanahalli, Bengaluru – 560103, have changed my name as SANDHYA R KAILAS vide affidavit dated 29.08.2025 sworn before notary S. Subashini, Bengaluru.

I, Jyotsnaben Prafulchandra Sheth W/o Prafulchandra Jayantilal Sheth R/o 1101, Axis Aspira, kothnur Main Road, jp Nagar 7th Phase, Bengaluru 560078 have changed my name to Jyotsna Dhirajlal Sheth for all purposes

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AMRITSAR VAISHNODEVI WITH KASHMIR 16 DAYS
OCT 05, 30 NOV 06, 13

CHAR DHAM YATRA 19 DAYS: SEP 19, 26 OCT 01, 08

KASHI AYODHYA GAYA/HARIDWAR* 11/16* DAYS
OCT 09, 12, 19,21* 24 NOV 01,02* 09*10, 16, 23,30*

KASHI NAIMISHARANYA CHITRAKOOT 15 DAYS
OCT 01, 13, 22, NOV 03, 12.26

GUJARAT/RAJASTHAN* 12/16*/21 DAYS
SEP 12*,15,22,26* OCT 01,06,10*15, 17,24* NOV 12,14*, 17,21*

ANDAMAN 6 DAYS: SEP 23, OCT 10

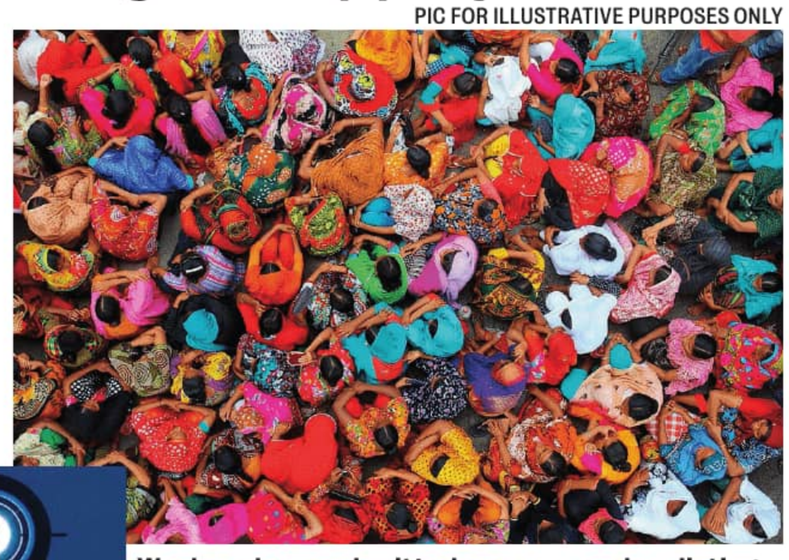
Women gig workers protest, allege company guards manhandled them

New partner onboarding workshop policy creates unease among workers

Atiya Firdos
c-syeda.atiya
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

PIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY



Workers have submitted a memorandum listing out seven demands

IN FOCUS
GIG ECONOMY

Women gig workers of Urban Company on Thursday alleged that they were manhandled by the company's security staff and later by police while waiting outside the firm's Karnataka headquarters in HSR Layout to meet the CEO. The workers said they were denied entry, threatened with criminal charges, and forced to disperse.

They had gone to press for redressal of what they called exploitative practices and for immediate implementation of the recently enacted Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Act, 2025. Later, the workers and their association approached Karmika Bhavan, where the Additional Labour Commissioner asked them to return today for a meeting.

The allegations

The workers, most of them women, had gone to submit their demands seeking withdrawal of the company's new Partner Onboarding Workshop (POW) policy and immediate implementation of the recently enacted Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Act, 2025. They alleged that Urban Company deployed bouncers to block them and that police also "mishandled" them. "We were pushed, shouted at, and told to leave. Some were threatened with criminal cases for simply demanding our rights," Selvi, Vice President, Gig & Platform Service Workers Union (GIPSWU), said.

Police, however, maintained that the workers were not permitted to stage any gathering at the location and were therefore asked to move.

The demands

The flashpoint was Urban Company's rollout of its stricter POW policy, which requires workers to complete 50 jobs to make up for a single cancellation. Workers said this is unrealistic for single parents or those with health and family emergencies. They also complained of arbitrary ID blocking, removal of older workers in favour of new recruits, and being forced into distant jobs without compensation.

The memorandum submitted to the management listed seven demands, including, withdrawal of the new POW cancellation policy, end to arbitrary blocking of IDs without due process, fair grievance redressal against harassment and abuse by customers, reform of the one-sided rating system that threatens livelihoods and an end to mandatory product purchases at inflated rates.

"Every day we live in fear of losing our livelihood because of arbitrary ID blocking or one bad rating," said a migrant worker from Bihar.

Union leaders said the new law passed by the Karnataka government guarantees social security for gig workers, but Urban Company's continued neglect "deepens the crisis of trust". "Urban Company has grown into a unicorn on the backs of women workers' sweat and blood. But instead of respecting us, the company treats us like digital slaves," said Selvi.

Bangalore Mirror reached out to Urban Company for its response, but is yet to hear from them.

SOCIALTATTLE

Srihari Karanth
@sriharikaranth
Follow
From clear sky to downpour to dazzling night — a full day of Bengaluru in 75 seconds!
#bangalorerains #bengaluruweather
9:29 pm · 28 Aug 25 · 51K Views

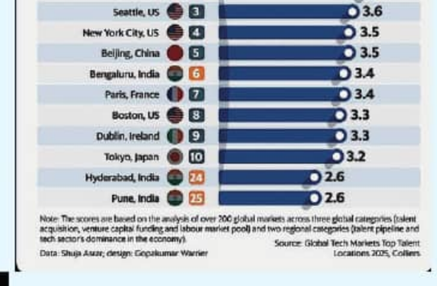
THAT WENT VIRAL

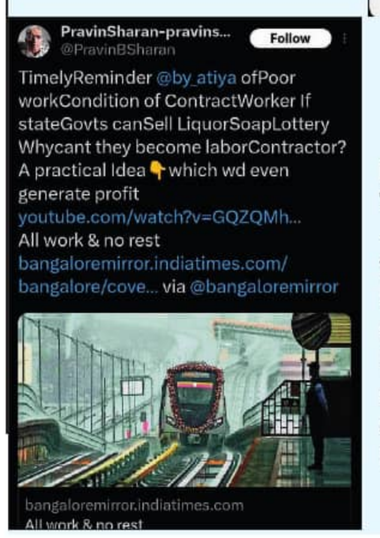
A time-lapse video by @sriharikaranth went viral on Twitter, with users wowed by the city's dramatic mood swings.

WHAT'S TWEETING?

— Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Pune have secured spots among the world's Top 25 tech hubs.

—Bengaluru collected nearly ₹19 crore in six days under the 50% traffic fine rebate drive, clearing over 6.7 lakh pending challans between August 23–28.


mint Data Bites
NEW RANKING PUTS BENGALURU
AMONG WORLD'S TOP 10 TECH HUBS
Top technology markets across the globe (scores out of 5)
Country Rank Score
San Francisco Bay Area, US 1 4.5
London, UK 2 4
Seattle, US 3 3.6
New York City, US 4 3.5
Beijing, China 5 3.5
Bengaluru, India 6 3.4
Paris, France 7 3.4
Boston, US 8 3.3
Dublin, Ireland 9 3.3
Tokyo, Japan 10 3.2
Hyderabad, India 24 2.6
Pune, India 25 2.6
Source: Global Tech Markets Top Talent Locations 2025, Colliers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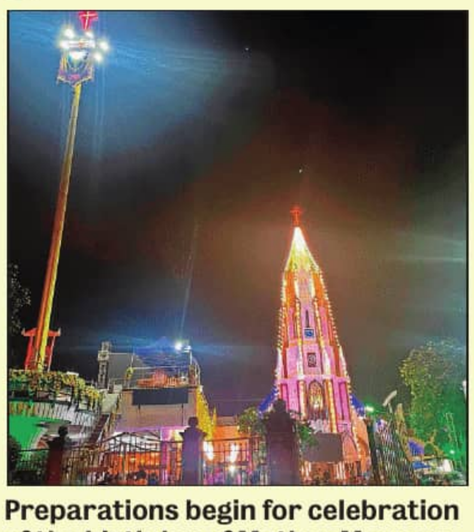
All work & no rest

BANGALORE MIRROR TAGGED

— @pravinBSharan, while tagging BM's recent story, highlighted the poor working conditions of contract workers. He wrote, 'If the state government can sell liquor, soap and lottery, why can't it also become a labour contractor?"

INBRIEF



Preparations begin for celebration of the birthday of Mother Mary on September 8, with a flag hosting ceremony at St. Mary's Basilica Church, Shivajinagar under the leadership of parish priest, Rev Dr. Arockiyaswamy Sebastian

Dharmasthala: Protection sought for Sujatha Bhatt

The Karnataka State Women's Commission has written to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the Dharmasthala mass burial case, urging immediate protection for Sujatha Bhatt, who has identified herself as the mother of Ananya Bhatt, a medical student who went missing in Dharmasthala in 2003.

In her letter to the SIT chief, Commission Chairperson Nagalakshmi Chaudhary expressed concern over the harassment faced by Sujatha in recent weeks. According to the Commission, media personnel have been persistently following her, pressuring her to make statements, and even visiting her residence at night to record videos.

-BMB

JDS X account in dock over fake letter about DKS

The High Grounds police have registered an FIR against the official social media handle of the Karnataka Janata Dal (Secular) for allegedly circulating fake news on X claiming that Deputy Chief Minister and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president DK Shivakumar had been expelled from the Congress party.

The controversial post, shared on August 26, displayed a fake All India Congress Committee (AICC) letterhead and read: "On the recommendation of the Disciplinary Action Committee, Karnataka Pradesh Congress president D.K. Shivakumar is hereby expelled from the Congress party..." BMB

Bomb threat to Gurudwara

A threatening email sent to the official account of the Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurudwara in Halasuru sparked panic among the community, prompting a police complaint in Bengaluru.

According to the police, the complaint was filed by Rishi Pal Singh (34), son of Narendra Pal Singh and a resident of the Gurudwara premises. Singh appeared at the police station and reported that the Gurudwara's official mail ID, sgssblr@gmail.com, received a mail at around 2:08 am on August 24 from an unknown address identified as rajagiri_marudhayan@outlook.com.

The threatening email, allegedly sent by a person identifying himself as "Raja Giri," carried an alarming message that read: "Soon! Evacuate all within 8 hrs."

-BMB

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

HUMILITY OVER GRANDEUR

Our reader reflects on the changing spirit of Ganesh Chaturthi, where devotion often gives way to grandeur towering idols, louder music, and extravagant mandaps. Amidst this display, he discovered a Ganesh-shaped mushroom in his backyard. When the neighbourhood slum children wished to use it for their simple mandap, he gladly shared it reminding us that true devotion lies in humility and joy, not opulence.

The picture was clicked by reader
N P Suryanarayana

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Residents fix massive pothole after BBMP ignored repeated repair requests

Frustrated over five months of inaction, Akshayanagar locals pooled ₹5,000 and repaired a 5x8 ft pothole themselves

Residents of Akshayanagar Main Road pooled in ₹5,000 from their own pockets to repair a large pothole after repeated requests to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) failed to bring any response.

The pothole, measuring about 5x8 feet, had remained in the middle of the busy stretch for over five months. According to residents, it had already caused several accidents, with some two-wheeler riders requiring hospitalisation.

On August 24, members of the Shree Pathanjali Yoga Shikshana Samithi (SPYSS) Karnataka, along with local residents, undertook the repair work. They spent around ₹3,000 on materials such as sand, cement and cut stones, while another ₹2,000 went toward labour charges. Dr. Karthik and Raghavendra, two residents, bore the labour cost, while the rest was collected through local contributions.

> **"We had to pool our own money to fix the dangerous pothole after repeated pleas to the BBMP went unanswered for five months**
>
> – AS Aswath, Retired Central Government officer

Those who participated included AS Aswath, a retired Central Government officer associated with SPYSS; GV Nayak, a retired bank officer; Srinivas, a senior resident; and Dattatreya Kulkarni, a retired BSNL officer. Former Sports Authority of India officials SP Rao, M Panth and Shivashankar were also part of the team. Others who pitched in were Venkat, a technician; Seorya, a civil engineer; and homemakers and yoga teachers Priya Shinde and Leela G Nayak. Several other residents from the neighbourhood assisted during the repairs.

Residents said they decided to take up the work themselves only after months of waiting for civic intervention. Despite repeated oral appeals, BBMP failed to act, leaving the road in a dangerous condition. "We were worried about more accidents, so we decided to do it ourselves," said one of the residents involved in the effort.

The pothole had remained open for over five months, making it particularly hazardous for two-wheelers because of its size and location on a busy road. While the residents' initiative has provided temporary relief, they emphasised that long-term solutions must come from the civic body.

Those involved expressed hope that BBMP will take responsibility for road maintenance and ensure timely repairs in the future. "We cannot keep doing this every time. It is the duty of civic authorities to act," a resident added. — BMB

Residents of Akshayanagar organised themselves, collected funds, and repaired the road to prevent further accidents

DID YOU KNOW?

Scientists have, for the first time, peered inside a dying star as it exploded, providing a rare glimpse into stellar evolution. Massive stars end their lives in supernova explosions, but their layers typically mix during the blast, hiding internal structures. The new discovery involves supernova 2021yfj, located over 2 billion light-years away. Unlike typical observations, this star had shed not only its outer hydrogen and helium layers but also its dense inner layers of silicon and sulfur. "We have never observed a star that was stripped to this amount," said Steve Schulze of Northwestern University, part of the team publishing the study in Nature. This finding supports long-held theories about the layered structure of massive stars, with lighter elements on the outside and heavier ones near the core. "Because so many layers had been stripped off, this confirmed what those layers were," said Anya Nugent of Harvard-Smithsonian, who was not involved in the research.
How the star became so stripped remains unclear whether through violent eruptions or a companion star. Scientists say such events are extremely rare and difficult to capture again. — AP

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

BUST FAKE NEWS WITH BANGALORE MIRROR

Write to us at mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

MEA denies fake donation claims in Nimisha Priya case

The Fact: The Ministry of External Affairs confirmed that social media posts asking for donations to a Government of India bank account for Nimisha Priya's case are fake. The MEA urged the public to avoid engaging with these false claims and misinformation.
Claim: Posts circulating on social media claimed that the Indian government had created an official bank account to collect monetary contributions for legal expenses in Nimisha Priya's case. They urged people to donate directly to this supposed government-designated account to support her.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Tuesday dismissed claims circulating on social media regarding monetary contributions being sought into a Government of India-designated bank account in connection with the Nimisha Priya case.

In a post on X, MEA FactCheck wrote, "We have seen claims being made on social media seeking monetary contributions into a GoI-designated bank account in the Nimisha Priya case. This is a fake claim."

A post shared online had urged people to donate directly to what it claimed was a government account to raise funds for the case. The MEA clarified that such claims are false and warned against engaging with them. The ministry had earlier confirmed that Indian national Nimisha Priya's execution in Yemen was postponed, while appealing to the public and media to avoid unverified reports surrounding the matter.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated that the government is providing all possible assistance to Priya and her family, working closely with local authorities and friendly governments to resolve the issue.

During the weekly briefing, Jaiswal responded to ANI's question, saying, "This is a sensitive matter. The Government of India has been extending all possible assistance in the case. As a result of our concerted efforts, the sentencing has been postponed. We continue to follow the matter closely and provide all possible assistance." The execution, initially scheduled for July 16, was postponed following diplomatic interventions and negotiations led by the Indian government. Jaiswal clarified that reports claiming her death sentence has been completely overturned are incorrect.

"We are also in touch with some friendly governments on the issue... Reports claiming that there have been certain developments are incorrect. Please wait for an update from us. We urge all sides to stay away from misinformation," he said.

Dr KA Paul
@KAPaulOfficial
Donate directly to Save Nimisha to the Government of India account designate . We need 8.3 crore rupees .
FAKE
SAVE NIMISHA PRIYA
10:31 AM · 19/08/2025 · 158 Views
Most relevant replies

Nimisha Priya, a 37-year-old nurse from Kerala, was convicted of murdering her business partner, Talal Abdo Mahdi, in 2017. She was sentenced to death in 2020, with the verdict upheld by Yemen's Supreme Judicial Council in November 2023.

On July 17, Jaiswal also noted that the Indian government had appointed a lawyer to assist Priya's family in navigating the complex legal process under Yemen's Sharia law. The government has also arranged regular consular visits and continues to engage with local authorities and other nations to find a favourable solution. "The Government of India has been extending all possible legal and consular support, including trying to secure more time for the family to reach a mutually agreeable resolution with the other party," he said. Priya, a nurse from Kerala, has been facing the death penalty in Yemen after being convicted of murder. Her family and various organisations have been seeking clemency through diplomatic and legal channels. — ANI

HEALTH TIP: A healthy range of weight loss is about a half kilo to one kilo a week

Bioactive compounds in cumin are the source of its anti-inflammatory properties

EVERY STEP COUNTS

10 easy ways to reach 10,000 steps

Walking is a simple, light exercise that has been proven to be essential for a healthy body. Research suggests that 10,0000 steps is the minimum number of steps that one should walk to improve heart health, reduce cortisol levels, and boost metabolism and immunity. Below are easy tips to help you achieve the goal.

1 Ditch The Elevator

The most simple and obvious way to complete the 10k step count is to take stairs whenever possible. Take the stairs to your office; don't let 10 or 12 floors deter you from the goal. Once you start doing it, it will come naturally. In the long term, you are reducing your chances of having chronic lifestyle diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure by 20 percent and also building mental and physical endurance. To make the swap from elevators to stairs easier, initially take breaks between the climb and soak your feet in salt water in the evening to release the tension and soothe the muscles.

2 Running Errands

This one simple tip will actually help you save money, save the planet and reach your goal. Uninstall all the quick delivery apps from your phone and walk to your nearby grocery and general stores for your groceries and daily essentials. This will also reduce the carbon footprint, supporting small businesses, and fostering and building community in the growing individualistic world, where loneliness has become a pandemic.

3 Park At the Far End

Park your car at the far end of the parking lot wherever you go, whether it's a salon, office, or a friend's place. This simple habit helps you walk more steps and also encourages punctuality. To walk across the parking lot, you'll need to arrive at your destination at least 5–20 minutes earlier, which in turn helps you become a calmer, more collected person overall.

Take inspiration from Japan, where early arrivers often park in the farthest corner so that those arriving at the last minute can find a spot closer to the entrance and make it on time.

4 Walk While Talking

Instead of sitting and talking on the phone, chat while walking; you won't even realise when your 10,000 steps get completed. This effective tip also calms you down and helps you think and speak more calmly. Let's say you talk for about 30 minutes each day on call; that duration could easily help you complete 3,000 steps, if not more. Keep your back and neck straight while walking, use earphones for ease, and do not text or look at your screen while walking.

5 Hourly Movement

Just a quick 5-minute walk every hour can help you reach your step count effectively while also improving your health in general since sitting continuously for long hours has proven to be hazardous to health. Just walk around the office and go to an open area to get some air; this is not only a physical but also a mental reset.

6 Track Your Steps

Track your steps with the help of a smartwatch, band, or even your phone. Looking at the numbers and knowing that you've completed almost 80 percent of the goal motivates you to complete the remaining 20. These apps let you celebrate milestones for completing your steps and building a streak over several days, which gives a dopamine boost that drives you to work harder.

7 Morning Walk

Morning walks set the stage for the day; a simple stroll in nature early in the morning can be beneficial for your eyes, metabolism and mind. People who go for morning walks regularly are said to have improved cognitive abilities, lower risk of cardiac arrest and increased creativity. Try walking on the grass for increased health benefits.

8 Find A Walking Buddy

Get yourself a walking buddy or join a walking club. Peer motivation is an underestimated motivational tool when it comes to building and sustaining healthy habits. You can find your tribe, who have the same health goals as you, in marathons and such events.

9 Explore The Neighbourhood

In your free time, walk around the city and explore the hidden gems, a quaint little cafe or art studio, or even do some of the most touristy things. See the city with a new lens, walk around and complete your steps while re-exploring the town.

You could also try colour walking through the neighbourhood, where you choose a colour and try to find that colour in your area; it's quite a fun experience.

10 Reward System

A reward system is a powerful way to self-motivate, set a goal, and then, if you hit the milestone, reward yourself accordingly. For example, for a one-week 10k-steps-a-day streak, you get X amount of spending money to get yourself anything you like. A 2-week streak gets you your favourite book or a movie ticket.

You can eventually remove the reward system by fading it out.

—Vidhi Jain, Femina

MIRRORLIGHTS

No strong evidence to show acupuncture, music therapy work for autism: Study

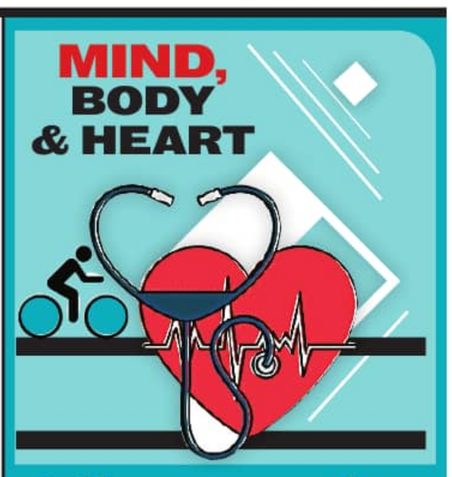
There is no strong evidence to support the use of complementary and alternative treatments such as acupuncture and music therapy for autism, finds a study on Thursday.

Researchers from the Paris Nanterre University, Paris Cité University in France and the University of Southampton in the UK showed that the safety of these treatments was rarely assessed.

"Many parents of autistic children, as well as autistic adults, turn to complementary and alternative medicines hoping they may help without unwanted side effects," said Professor Richard Delorme, Head of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Unit at Robert Debré Hospital in Paris.

"However, it is necessary to carefully consider evidence from rigorous randomised trials before concluding that these treatments should be tried," Delorme added.

For the study, published in the journal Nature Human Behaviour, the team assessed 248 meta-analyses, including 200 clinical trials involving over 10,000 participants. **—IANS**



All you need to know about...

Tweaks to cut diabetes risk

31% dip

A Mediterranean-style diet, in combination with reduced caloric intake, moderate physical activity, and professional support for weight loss, may cut the risk of type 2 diabetes (T2D) by 31%, according to a new study co-authored by researchers at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Modest changes

The study was published on August 25, 2025, in the Annals of Internal Medicine."We're facing a global epidemic of diabetes," said co-author Frank Hu, Fredrick J. Stare Professor of Nutrition and Epidemiology and chair of the Department of Nutrition. "With the highest-level evidence, our study shows that modest, sustained changes in diet and lifestyle could prevent millions of cases of this disease worldwide," added Co-author Frank Hu.

Study

A team of collaborators from the PREDIMED-Plus clinical trial, the largest nutrition and lifestyle randomised trial in Europe, sought to understand how the diet's benefits may be enhanced with additional healthy lifestyle changes.
The intervention group adhered to a Mediterranean diet, reduced their caloric intake by approximately 600 calories per day, engaged in moderate physical activity, such as brisk walking and strength and balance exercises, and received professional support for weight loss control.
The control group adhered to a Mediterranean diet without calorie restriction, exercise guidance, or professional support. Participants ranged from age 55 to 75, were overweight or obese, and had metabolic syndrome, but were free of T2D at baseline.

Measurable benefit

"In practical terms, adding calorie control and physical activity to the Mediterranean diet prevented around three out of every 100 people from developing diabetes -- a clear, measurable benefit for public health," said co-author Miguel Martinez-Gonzalez. **ANI**

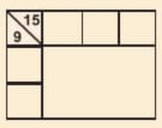
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
facebook.com/theBangaloremirror
@BangaloreMirror

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

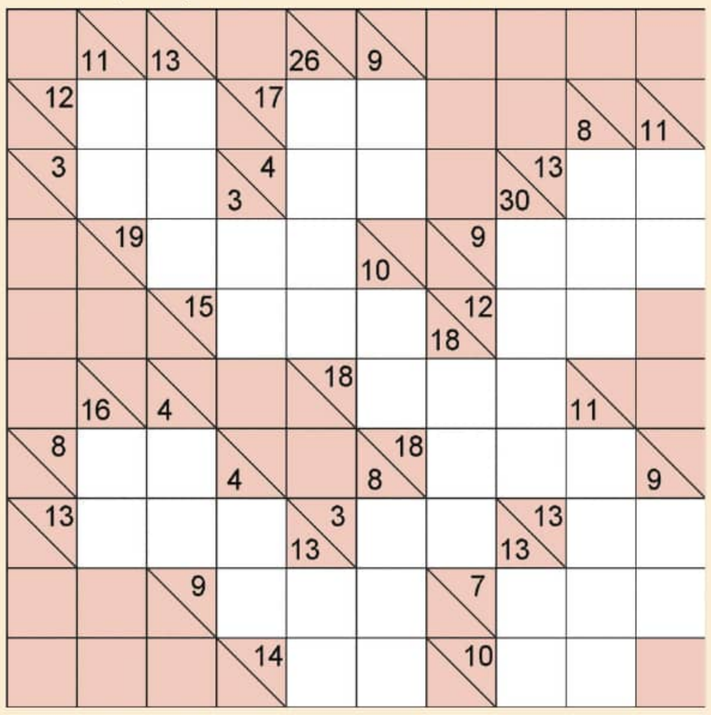
6.2% of 99.9 = ?

Kakuro

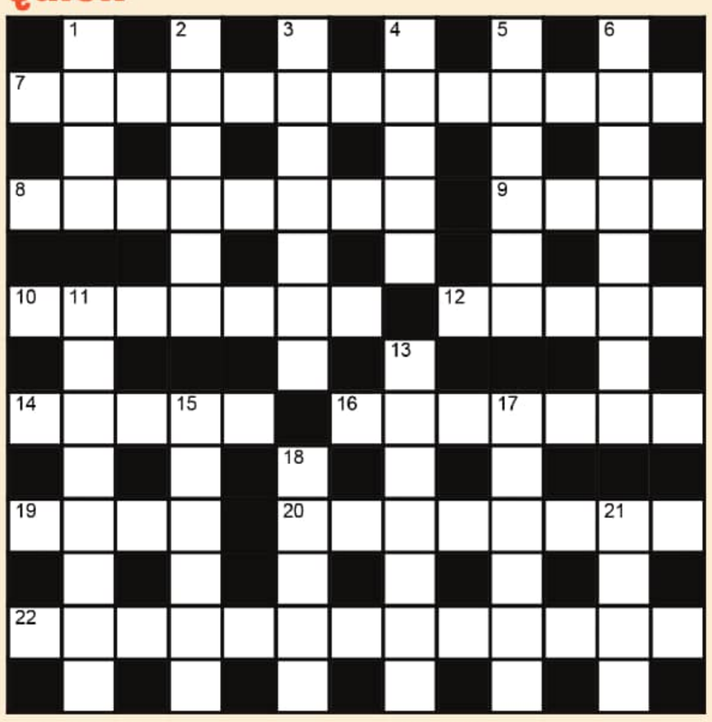
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Indian Prime Minister from Nov. 90 to Mar. 91 (13)
8 Manner (8)
9 Mom's brother in India (4)
10 Takes a siesta (7)
12 Ancient Germans (5)
14 Makes bubbles (5)
16 Telling trivial lies (7)
19 Fusses (4)
20 Precious, expensive or costly (8)
22 Children's party game (7,6)

DOWN

1 Voucher (4)
2 US junior naval officer (6)
3 Great victory (7)
4 Off-center (5)
5 With hands on hips (6)
6 Our former PM Dr __ Singh (8)
11 An advantageous purchase (1,4,3)
13 Local variety of speech (7)
15 Sacredly obscure or secret (6)
17 Vidhyarthi ____ : Dosa place in Gandhi Bazaar (6)
18 Pertaining to birds (5)
21 Enticement (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: L EQUALS C

K LPD'I LWPDJR IWR YKXR-LIKFD FC IWR SKDY, VNI K LPD PYENGI OQ GPKAG IF PASPQG XRPLW OQ YRGIKDPIKFD.

Linemaro

Guess what I'm wearing? The smile you gave me

Mindchow

The next best thing to knowing something is knowing where to find it

Joke of the day

I feel that if a person has problems communicating, the very least he can do is to shut up

Loop

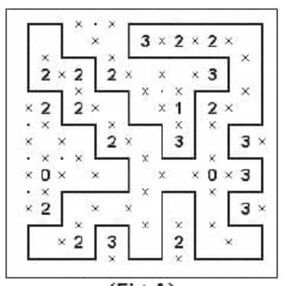
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

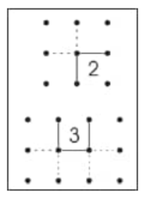
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

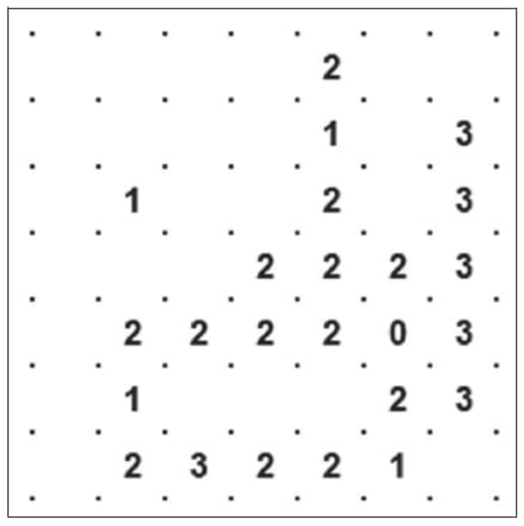
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



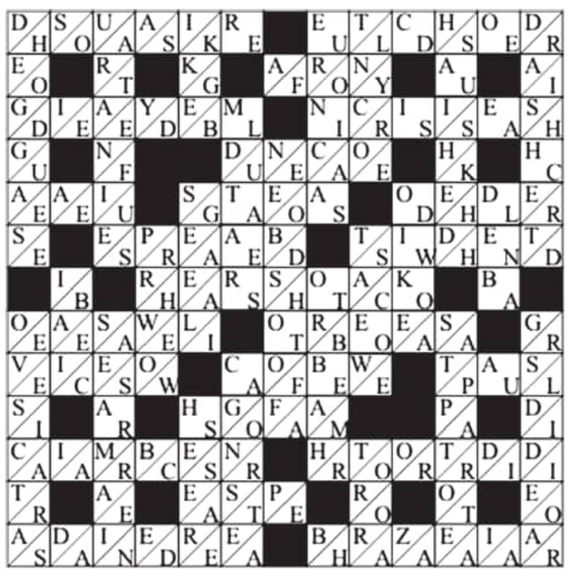
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



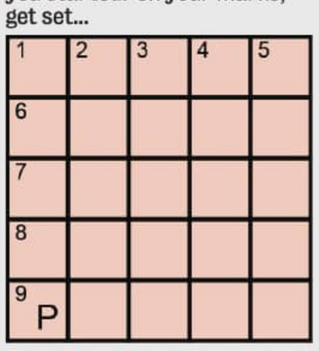
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 SS Gor; 6 Trice;
7 Toots; 8 A ruse;
9 TY pot

DOWN

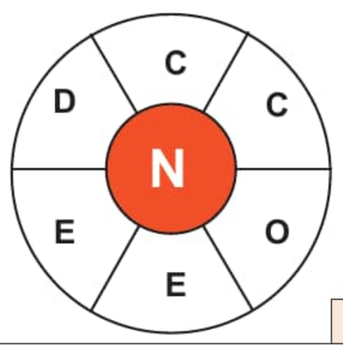
1 Or pug; 2 To err;
3 To tec; 4 To sat;
5 Sy sis

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the grid?

4	8 3 2	8
5 7 4		2 3 3
5	6 1 4	?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; **07** Good; **08** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	1	9	7	5				
	8		6					5
6				2				7
	6	5						
4	7						2	9
						6	4	
8				3				1
3					9		8	
				6	8	9	3	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

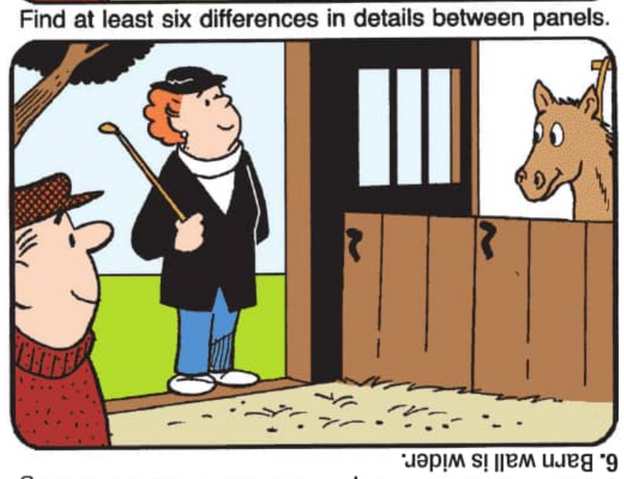
Easy = 7
2 4 8 9

Medium = 4
2 4 5 7

Hard = 29
2 3 8 5

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



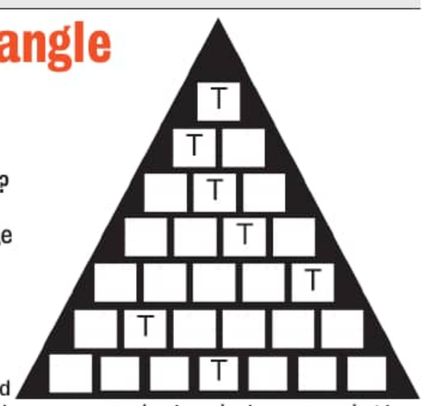
Differences: 1. Horse is moved. 2. Riding crop is moved. 3. Handle is moved. 4. Cap is different. 5. Glove is missing. 6. Barn wall is wider.

Riddler

A race perhaps no one can win. Nature that will lead to sin. Beings from a planet blue. I know some and so do you. Who or what is it?

Alpha triangle

1 Tonne, abbr.
2 Bye!
3 Ingested
4 Tardy
5 Speak sheepishly?
6 Firm; steady
7 John, Paul, George & Ringo

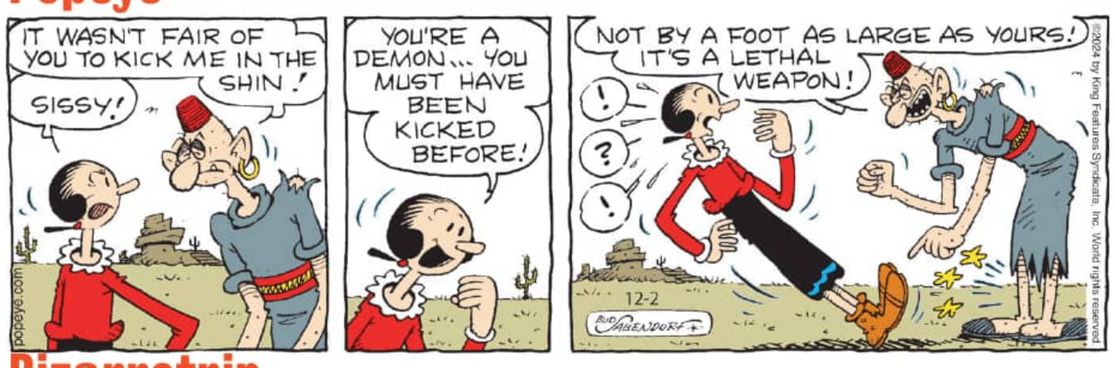


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


IT WASN'T FAIR OF YOU TO KICK ME IN THE SHIN!
SISSY!
YOU'RE A DEMON... YOU MUST HAVE BEEN KICKED BEFORE!
NOT BY A FOOT AS LARGE AS YOURS! IT'S A LETHAL WEAPON!
12-2
BUD SAGENDORF
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Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

And now, a word from the National Council on Oysters and Corn:
SHUCKS!
©2025 creators.com 5/23
www.creators.com
This has been a word from the National Council on Oysters and Corn.

Hart of the city

MS. WARDELL?
HEY, HEART. WHAT CAN I HELP YOU WITH?
CAN I READ THE SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS TODAY?
SURE! LOVE YOUR SCHOOL SPIRIT AND MOTIVATION!
HELLO, PHILLY MIDDLE! IT'S ME, HEART LAMARR, YOUR FAVORITE SCHOOL ACTOR. TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS WILL BE IN THE FORM OF A SONG!
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 AMRREWS MCMEEL
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

LUCILLE MCKENZIE
BORN JANUARY 8 1920
DIED MARCH 7 2009
BATIUK & DAVIS
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Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
A surge of inner strength and determination will help you complete pending projects ahead of schedule. Confidence remains high, enabling firm decisions. Good news from siblings may bring family joy. Short, fruitful business trips could open new opportunities and expand your network.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Happiness surrounds you today as you enjoy quality time with loved ones. A small celebration or purchase may bring harmony at home. Avoid blunt remarks, as harsh words could hurt others. Keeping speech balanced ensures warmth in relationships.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
The day looks highly favorable for career growth. Strong focus and determination will help you strategize business plans effectively. Networking brings influential partners who could boost future projects. Professional recognition and personal growth are on the horizon.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Energy levels may feel low, causing delays in tasks and indecisiveness. Avoid unnecessary risks like rash driving or adventurous travel. Stay calm and patient to navigate through this phase successfully.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
A promising day for finances and business. Past losses may convert into profits, improving cash flow. Additional income sources may strengthen stability. Love relationships could progress toward commitment. Stay alert to avoid negative intentions around you.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Work will keep you busy as plans for business expansion and investments move forward. Your efforts may earn recognition from seniors and possibly a promotion. Professional image strengthens, laying the foundation for long-term success.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Opportunities for growth arrive through influential connections. Partnerships will prove rewarding. Peace and balance dominate your day. Job seekers may hear positive news. A visit to a spiritual place could bring inner calm.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Low energy may lead to impatience or arrogance, affecting relationships. Avoid arguments and harsh words with colleagues or partners. Reckless travel should be avoided. Couples should give each other space to maintain harmony.

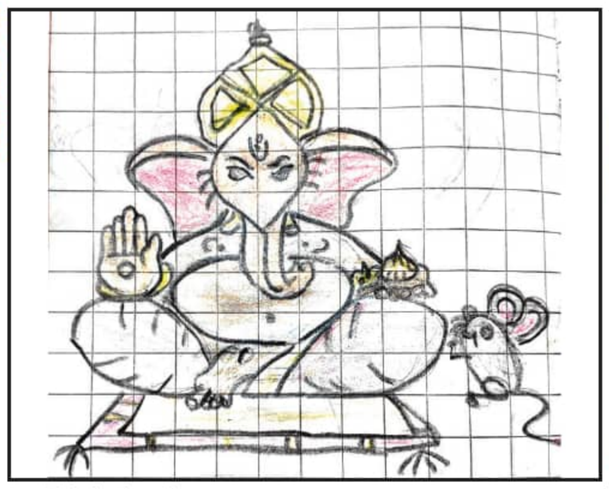
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Positive planetary influence brings progress. Partnership issues resolve, paving the way for new plans and success. Students and job seekers may receive good news. Ego clashes in relationships ease, bringing understanding and peace.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Financial stability improves as delayed money is released. Recognition at work could lead to promotions. Legal matters may resolve in your favor. Collaborations and partnerships progress smoothly, resolving long-standing disputes.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Personal growth and future goals take center stage. You may explore higher education or skill development opportunities. Interactions with children bring joy. Students should stay focused for academic success. Determination will bring long-term rewards.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Restlessness and impatience may disrupt focus. Avoid major investments in property or fixed assets today. Seek guidance from elders or mentors for clarity. By evening, situations improve, restoring balance and positivity.

KIDZONE



Asmith G.A., Bengaluru

Anushika, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
62×(1000-1) / 10000
(62000-62) / 10000
= 6.1938

BULL'S EYE
CONCEDE, cone, coned, done, encode, need, node, once

STRIKE OUT

H	O	U	S	I	E	D
E	R	K	F	R	Y	A
G	N	U	N	C	O	H
D	I	A	D	E	M	I
E	A	U	S	T	O	A
S	S	P	E	E	D	D
B	H	A	S	S	O	C
E	A	S	E	L	O	B
V	I	E	W	A	F	E
I	A	S	O	F	A	R
C	A	M	B	E	R	H
T	A	T	E	R	T	E
S	A	N	D	R	A	B

FAST FIVE

G	R	O	S	S
R	E	C	T	I
O	T	T	O	S
U	R	E	A	S
P	O	T	T	Y

RIDDLER Human

QUICK

C	H	A	N	D	R	A
I	S	I	T	U	D	E
A	T	T	I	T	U	D
C	A	N	A	P	S	G
F	O	A	M	S	F	I
A	D	O	S	V	A	L
B	I	T	I	E	V	E
M	U	S	I	C	A	L
Y	C	N	T	N	E	

MENSA PUZZLE
9. Take any group of 5 numbers along the side of the square, and their total is always 25.

QUOTE UNCODE
I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.

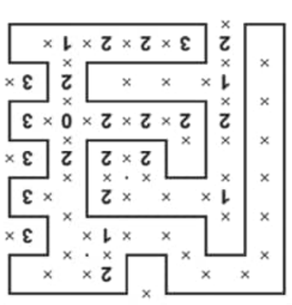
SUDOKU

2	1	9	7	5	3	8	6	4
7	8	3	6	9	4	2	1	5
6	5	4	8	2	1	3	9	7
9	6	5	4	8	2	1	7	3
4	7	8	3	1	6	5	2	9
1	3	2	9	7	5	6	4	8
8	9	6	2	3	7	4	5	1
3	2	1	5	4	9	7	8	6
5	4	7	1	6	8	9	3	2

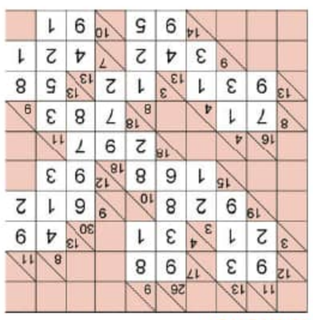
ALPHA TRIANGLE
T, Ta, Ate, Late, Bleat, Stable, Beatles.

GO FIGURE
Easy
9 + 2 + 4 − 8 = 7
Medium
4 + 7 − 2 − 5 = 4
Hard
2 + 5 x 3 + 8 = 29

LOOP



KAKURO



Volume No 18, Issue No 035 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/22411 Published by for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by Lokesh K. V. at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore - 560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru - 560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon - responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

 # Festive circuit
Priyanka Chopra delighted as her production venture 'The Cycle Of Love' is set to premiere at Telluride

Whole new look

Actress Mouni Roy has been giving fans a sneak peek into her fun moments, captured on camera. The actress recently shared a series of photos and videos on her social media account where the actress is looking hot.

In a picture, Mouni was seen absolutely unrecognizable in a photo. The actress' facial features have seen quite a lot of changes over the years, making fans question if she had gone under the knife. Mouni has always maintained her silence over the same and chose to ignore questions over her rumoured "surgery."

The series also consisted of her other fun moments captured during her leisure time and a few during her time at work. Mouni also shared some fun pictures of herself with her best friend and actress Disha Patani. In one of the videos, the Naagin star was gobbling up some Chinese food. From noodles to dry Manchurian, Mouni was seen enjoying her meal. The actress, who is a fitness freak, does have her cheat days where she indulges in all her favourite delicacies.

Talking about her work front, the actress is busy shooting for Madhur Bhandarkar's much-anticipated film, "The Wives." —IANS

CROWDED OUT

Netizens empathise with Janhvi's discomfort as she navigates crowd

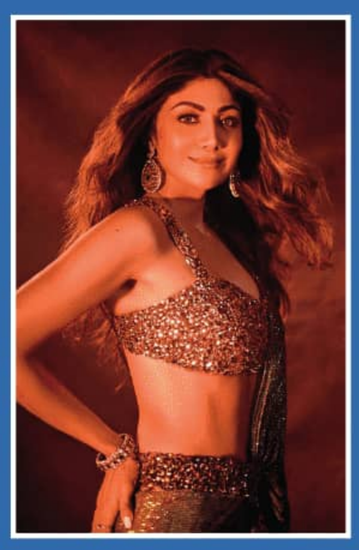
Janhvi Kapoor and Sidharth Malhotra's much-awaited film 'Param Sundari' has released in cinemas today, just a day before the actors were spotted at Lalbaugcha Raja. They walked barefoot to seek blessings from Lord Ganesha. A particular video of Janhvi Kapoor at the pandal has caught everyone's attention online. In the video shared on Instagram by SnehZala, Janhvi Kapoor can be seen looking uneasy in the crowd. Her expressions make it clear she was not comfortable, and at moments, she even looked scared. In contrast, Sidharth appeared calm and unfazed as they made their way through the devotees.

The clip has been widely shared on Reddit, where many users reacted with concern. One person wrote, "Any normal woman knows how uncomfortable and fearful these types of situations are. Especially being short too, when you can't see anything in front of you and are being pushed to smithereens."

Another user related to her expression, saying, "This is me in places as well, it's not a celebrity thing but a woman thing. Sometimes you can't avoid certain areas or events, whatever, and I have the same uncomfortable expression since I've been in places before where people take advantage of the crowd and grope you."

Some male users also expressed discomfort watching her situation. A comment read, "As a man, I feel uncomfortable seeing her. It's like you can tell she is not acting; she is genuinely concerned. And if you are her bodyguard or friend or something, you will feel uncomfortable as well." —ETimes

Shilpa Shetty channels her inner 'Chandni'



Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty channelled her inner Chandni as she posed in a beautiful yellow chiffon saree and called it her ode to late legendary actress Sridevi."

Shilpa took to Instagram, where she shared a reel video of herself dressed in a bright yellow chiffon saree as she got herself clicked during a photo-shoot. She used the instrumental title track of the 1989 film, starring Sridevi and Rishi Kapoor, as the background score for the video.

"My Ode to my forever OG Sriji #Chandni #Chand nivibes," Shilpa wrote as caption.

Chandni, a romantic film, directed by Yash Chopra, stars Sridevi in the title role of Chandni Mathur, a young effervescent woman torn between two suitors played by Rishi Kapoor and Vinod Khanna.

The film also stars Waheeda Rehman, Anupam Kher, Sushma Seth, Mita Vashisht, and Manohar Singh.

After a series of failed action films, Yash Chopra decided to make a romantic musical, a film with all the hallmarks of what has come to be known as the "Yash Chopra style" – heroine-oriented, romantic and emotional with melodic music used in songs picturized in foreign locations.. —IANS

Politically incorrect? Julia's take

US actor Julia Roberts delves into the rarefied world of academia in her latest film "After the Hunt", denying that its ambiguous handling of a campus sexual assault allegation was politically incorrect.

Directed by Italy's Luca Guadagnino and also starring Ayo Edebiri and Andrew Garfield, the movie is premiering on Friday at the Venice Film Festival, bringing Roberts to the Lido's famed red carpet for the first time in her career.

Roberts plays Alma Olsson, a Yale philosophy professor whose life is upended when her longtime friend and colleague is accused by one of her favourite students of sexual assault.

Speaking to reporters ahead of the opening, Roberts pushed back on suggestions the film risked echoing cultural patterns that cast suspicion on survivors, particularly Black women, while preserving ambiguity around males accused of assault.

"We're not making statements, we are portraying these people in these moments of time," Roberts said.

—Reuters

In a different avatar

Director Kishore Moodbidri deserves praise for showcasing Vijay Raghavendra, known for playing soft characters, in a different avatar. And Vijay Raghavendra has surely used this opportunity to prove that he too can play a variety of characters.

Rippan Swamy begins with a traditional play of the Malnad region. Later the focus shifts to the gory death of Rippan Swamy (Vijay Raghavendra) by 'suicide'. At this juncture, the director introduces a flashback narrating the lifestyle of Rippan Swamy and how he became Rippan Swamy from Swamy. We are shown his family background – an elder brother and sister-in-law and a niece. And how he got married to Mangala (Ashwini Chandrashekar), a medical student and how he confined her to his house. He has five followers too. We also see how Santosh (Santosh Shetty) was killed and how Rippan Swamy seeks police officer Anand's (Vajradhar Jain) help. Meanwhile, Anjumala, a police officer, attempts to investigate Santosh's murder case. The specialty of the movie is that it not only showcases scenic beauty of Malnad but also the other side – crime. You have to watch the movie to know how Rippan Swamy died.

RIPPAN SWAMY
3.0 RATING ★★★½☆
- **DIRECTOR** Kishore Moodbidri
- **ACTORS** Vijay Raghavendra, Ashwini Chandrashekar, Yamuna Srinidhi, Prakash Thuminad
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 140 minutes

Vijay Raghavendra is at his best. He plays a completely different character. The character owns a farm and pork business. It looks brutal and also psychotic and unpredictable. Vijay Raghavendra looks rough and tough throughout the movie thus making the audiences gaze at him on the screen in awe. Ashwini Chandrashekar looks beautiful and deserves appreciation for agreeing to play such a layered character. Her performance is superb in the climax. Yamuna Srinidhi provides good support. Prakash Thuminad provides comic relief. Cinematographer Ranganathan CM has done a good job behind the camera. He has succeeded in capturing the greenery of Malnad. Music director Samuel Aby has done a good job.

It is worth a watch for those who want to see Vijay Raghavendra in a different avatar.

—Y Maheswara Reddy